

Stephen F. Austin State University

**SFA ScholarWorks**

---

Electronic Theses and Dissertations

---

4-2024

## So Much (For) Saving Rock and Roll: The Musical DNA of Fall Out Boy

Blake Buehler

buehlerm@jacks.sfasu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/etds>



Part of the [Composition Commons](#)

[Tell us](#) how this article helped you.

---

### Repository Citation

Buehler, Blake, "So Much (For) Saving Rock and Roll: The Musical DNA of Fall Out Boy" (2024). *Electronic Theses and Dissertations*. 530.

<https://scholarworks.sfasu.edu/etds/530>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by SFA ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of SFA ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [cdsscholarworks@sfasu.edu](mailto:cdsscholarworks@sfasu.edu).

---

## So Much (For) Saving Rock and Roll: The Musical DNA of Fall Out Boy

### Creative Commons License



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

SO MUCH (FOR) SAVING ROCK AND ROLL: THE MUSICAL DNA OF FALL OUT  
BOY

By

BLAKE D BUEHLER, Bachelor of Music

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

Stephen F. Austin State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Master of Music

STEPHEN F. AUSTIN STATE UNIVERSITY

May, 2024

SO MUCH (FOR) SAVING ROCK AND ROLL: THE MUSICAL DNA OF FALL OUT  
BOY

By

BLAKE D BUEHLER, Bachelor of Music

APPROVED:

---

Dr. Stephen Lias, Thesis Director

---

Dr. Ben Morris, Committee Member

---

Dr. Kathryn Fenton, Committee Member

---

Dr. Gabriela Miranda-Recinos Committee Member

---

Forrest Lane, Ph. D.  
Dean of Research and Graduate Studies

## ABSTRACT

Although the American rock band Fall Out Boy has had a great impact upon the popular music scene since their first album in 2003, little academic literature exists exploring their musical and cultural influences and impact. Through careful transcription and analysis this thesis defines Fall Out Boy's compositional tendencies and contextualizes their work in the greater Western popular music canon. My composition, *AQUA*, is a continuation and response to Fall Out Boy's seminal album, *So Much (For) Stardust*. Grounded in influences from Fall Out Boy's music and my personal journey as a musician and queer individual, *AQUA* represents a deeply personal and thematically rich exploration of identity, resilience, and artistic expression. The central goal of *AQUA* is to bridge the narrative gap between *So Much (For) Stardust* and my own work, adapting their musical language with my own compositional practices. Through a multifaceted approach that embraces diverse influences and explores complex themes, *AQUA* represents a significant milestone in my creative output. It intertwines the realms of rock music and contemporary chamber music and offers a unique perspective on the intersection of identity and creativity.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank Dr. Stephen Lias for his unwavering support of me, not only through the completion of this thesis, but through the entirety of my time at Stephen F. Austin State University. Without him a project of this caliber would not have come to fruition. I further extend my thanks to the other members of my committee, Dr. Ben Morris, Dr. Kathryn Fenton, and Dr. Gabriela Miranda-Recinos, who provided excellent feedback and helped improve this thesis to its fullest potential. I am grateful to Vivian Fung, who gave me the push to write a composition that fully embraces the negative and less-glamorous facets of the queer experience. This work would not have been possible without the contributions Fall Out Boy has made in popular music, and thus in my personal life. I sincerely thank them for creating space for marginalized artists and making music that has inspired me throughout my musical journey. Finally, I would like to thank my cat, Po, who without fail sat on my laptop every time I attempted to do any work on this thesis.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract.....	i
Acknowledgements.....	ii
Table of Contents.....	iii
List of Musical Examples.....	iv
List of Figures.....	v
List of Audio Examples.....	vi
CHAPTER 1 – Microscopic Musical Elements Of <i>So Much (For) Stardust</i> : Melody, Rhythm, and Harmony.....	1
CHAPTER 2 – Macroscopic Elements of <i>So Much (For) Stardust</i> : Form, Orchestration, and Cultural Matters.....	32
CHAPTER 3 – AQUA.....	57
CHAPTER 4 – <i>AQUA</i> : Analysis, Explanation, and Reflection.....	169
Bibliography.....	190
Appendix A - Transcriptions.....	196
Vita.....	241

## LIST OF MUSICAL EXAMPLES

Musical Example A: Excerpt of Verse 1, “Hold Me Like a Grudge” .....	7
Musical Example B: Excerpt of chorus of “Love From The Other Side” .....	8
Musical Example C: Excerpt of first verse of “Love From The Other Side” .....	9
Musical Example D: Excerpt of the bridge of “So Much (For) Stardust” .....	11
Musical Example E: Excerpt of verse one of “Love From The Other Side” .....	12
Musical Example F: Excerpt of pre-chorus of “Love From The Other Side” .....	13
Musical Example G: Excerpt of first verse of “Love From The Other Side” .....	14
Musical Example H: Excerpt of the chorus of “So Much (For) Stardust” .....	16
Musical Example I: Excerpt of the chorus of “Love From The Other Side” .....	20
Musical Example J: Excerpt of the first verse of “I Am My Own Muse” .....	22
Musical Example K: Excerpt of verse one of “So Much (For) Stardust” .....	24
Musical Example L: Chorus of “So Much (For) Stardust” .....	26
Musical Example M: Pre-chorus of “So Much (For) Stardust” .....	27
Musical Example N: Bridge of “So Much (For) Stardust” .....	29
Musical Example O: Chorus of “There Will Always Be A Light On” .....	170
Musical Example P: Power chords in “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me)” .....	173
Musical Example Q: Turnkey modulation in “There Will Always Be A Light On.” ....	176



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Phrase Structure of “Love From The Other Side” Chorus.....	19
Figure 2: “So Good Right Now” Form Diagram.....	33
Figure 3: “I Am My Own Muse” Form Diagram.....	35
Figure 4: “Heaven, Iowa” Form Diagram.....	36
Figure 5: “Heartbreak Feels So Good” Form Diagram.....	37
Figure 6: “Flu Game” Form Diagram.....	37
Figure 7: Comprehensive genre analysis of <i>So Much (For) Stardust</i> , including aurally perceived genre, instrumentation, and quotations.....	40
Figure 8: The interconnectedness of lyrics in “So Much (For) Stardust”.....	49
Figure 9: Pete Wentz in the <i>So Much (For) Stardust</i> Lyric Booklet.....	51
Figure 10: Form diagram of “From the Office of Paul R. McHugh” showcasing the various key areas.....	173
Figure 11: Form diagram of “Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials”.....	178
Figure 12: Form diagram of “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me)” ....	179
Figure 13: Form diagram of “From the Office of Paul R. McHugh”.....	179
Figure 14: Fall Out Boy lyrics referenced in <i>AQUA</i> .....	187

## LIST OF AUDIO EXAMPLES

Audio Example 1: “Fake Out” Chorus .....	7
Audio Example 2: “Heartbreak Feels So Good” Verse 1 .....	8
Audio Example 3: “What a Time To Be Alive” Verse 1 .....	8
Audio Example 4: “Flu Game” Chorus .....	9
Audio Example 5: “Kintsugi Kid” Chorus .....	9
Audio Example 6: “I Am My Own Muse” Chorus.....	10
Audio Example 7: “Love From The Other Side” Pre-chorus .....	10
Audio Example 8: “The Kintsugi Kid” Verse 2 .....	11
Audio Example 9: “Flu Game” Verse 1 .....	11
Audio Example 10: “Hold Me Like a Grudge” Groove .....	15
Audio Example 11: “Heaven, Iowa” Groove .....	15
Audio Example 12: Orchestra in “I Am My Own Muse” .....	41

**CHAPTER 1 – MICROSCOPIC MUSICAL ELEMENTS OF *SO MUCH (FOR)*  
*STARDUST: MELODY, RHYTHM, AND HARMONY***

Fall Out Boy has long served as a source of inspiration in my musical career; I continuously return to their music both for enjoyment and for compositional study. Their music has been influential to my development as both a performer and composer, and all my work is in some way inspired by them. A close examination of Fall Out Boy's music, particularly their most recent studio album *So Much (For) Stardust*, is imperative in understanding the original composition (*A Queer Unrelenting Anger*, henceforth referred to as *AQUA*) contained in this thesis. It is worth mentioning that all the notated musical examples used in this thesis are my own transcriptions, and the figures are derived from my analysis of the musical content and thus also original work.

On May 6, 2003, Chicago-based alternative rock band Fall Out Boy released their first studio album, *Take This to Your Grave*.<sup>1,2</sup> This record launched their rise to stardom

---

<sup>1</sup> A brief overview of the members of Fall Out Boy: (1) Patrick Stump is the lead singer, rhythm guitarist, and primary composer of their music. (2) Pete Wentz is the bassist and lyricist of the group and is also one of the founding members. (3) Joe Trohman is the lead guitarist and the other founding member. (4) Andy Hurley is the drummer.

<sup>2</sup> Fall Out Boy, *Take This to Your Grave*, Released May 6, 2003, recorded October 2002-February 2003, Fueled by Ramen, Spotify Streaming Audio.

and is often regarded as one of the greatest pop-punk albums of all time and a cornerstone of the genre. Amongst the chaos of the newly emerging hardcore punk, pop-punk, and emo genres, *Alternative Press* referred to it as a “... deceptively smart pop-punk masterpiece that ushered in a vibrant scene resurgence with a potent combination of charisma, new media marketing and hardcore-punk urgency.”<sup>3</sup> Twenty years later, on March 24, 2023, after six more albums, Fall Out Boy released their eighth studio album, *So Much (For) Stardust*.<sup>4</sup> This record is the culmination of twenty years of artistic growth and musical development which is apparent through the maturity and excellence of the album.

*So Much (For) Stardust* has been very well-received critically. The general public reaction was excitement that the band had released new music, as they had not released any new music since *MANIA* in 2018.<sup>5</sup> The week of the album release, “Love From The Other Side” rose to number one on the Alternative Airplay Charts, and the album debuted at number six on the US Billboard 200 Chart.<sup>6</sup> Album reviews, while generally positive,

---

<sup>3</sup> Brendan Manley, “Take This to Your Grave,” *Alternative Press*, May 6, 2003.

<sup>4</sup> Fall Out Boy, *So Much (for) Stardust*, Released March 24, 2023, Fueled by Ramen, Spotify Streaming Audio.

<sup>5</sup> Aliya Chaudhry, “Review: Fall Out Boy’s *So Much (For) Stardust* isn’t a comeback – it’s an Expansion,” *Alternative Press*, March 24, 2023.

<sup>6</sup> Kevin Rutherford, “Fall Out Boy Breaks Alternative Airplay Record With First No. 1,” *Billboard*, February 24, 2023; and “Lana Del Rey and Fall Out Boy Both Score No. 1 Debuts on Rock & Alternative Album Charts,” *Billboard*, April 5, 2023.

contained mixed reactions. Rolling Stone found that the album “highlights what’s made them 21st-century rock’s most endearing misfits” while also being highly critical of some of the more ‘pop style’ tunes like “So Good Right Now” and “What a Time To Be Alive.”<sup>7</sup> Alternative Press praised the “grandiose” nature of the album and its “realness.”<sup>8</sup> Both these reviews, and others, highlighted its return to their “classic” sound with modern expansions.<sup>9</sup> Patrick Stump has said that *So Much (For) Stardust* is the sequel to *Folie a Deux*, in that he wrote it in the headspace of “what would an album written right after that have sounded like if we had not taken a break?”<sup>10</sup> Pete Wentz has said that many of the lyrics came from unfinished poems, and reflections on, the *Infinity On High* era.<sup>11</sup> It is clear that *So Much (For) Stardust* is very much a ‘throwback,’ and it was extremely well received by critics and fans alike.

It is important when discussing music through the lens of queer theory to consider some of the foundational ideas of such theory. Queerness is often viewed as a dichotomy:

---

<sup>7</sup> Brittany Spanos, “Review: Fall Out Boy Show Off Their Tightest Hooks on ‘So Much (for) Stardust’,” *Rolling Stone*, March 29, 2023.

<sup>8</sup> Aliya Chaudhry, “Review: Fall Out Boy’s *So Much (For) Stardust* isn’t a comeback – it’s an Expansion,” *Alternative Press*, March 24, 2023.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> “Fall Out Boy: ‘So Much (for) Stardust’ & New Beginnings,” interviewed by Zane Lowe, *Apple Music*, March 23, 2023.

<sup>11</sup> Pete Wentz, interviewed by Zach Sang on *The Zach Sang Show*, April 6, 2023.

either something is queer, or it is not (or, more problematically, mainstream society may refer to non-queerness as “normal”).<sup>12</sup> But this fails to account for the great gray areas that occupy reality.<sup>13</sup> Furthermore, the word ‘queer’ itself is resistant to definition and any attempt to ‘normalize queerness’ is to eradicate the idea of ‘queer’ itself.<sup>14</sup> By destabilizing the dichotomy, the perceived “opposites” are revealed to be non-absolute, and therefore the gray area, or “other,” gains its own stable identity.<sup>15</sup> It is through this otherness that I perceive both Fall Out Boy’s musical output and my own musical creation. Fall Out Boy certainly exists somewhere in the ‘other’- as will be explored in the chapters to follow. Likewise, I find myself, and thus my creative output, somewhere within the ‘other’ – while I generally define myself as ‘queer,’ the degree of this ‘queerness’ varies by context. This is to say, in order to wholistically analyze Fall Out Boy’s work and my own, queer theory is used as a tool, but not always the primary lens through which analysis occurs.

The goal of analyzing Fall Out Boy’s work is to put my own work into context. The analysis treats both ‘conventional’ and ‘unconventional’ matters, as well as ‘musical’ and ‘cultural’ matters, as facets of equal importance, and furthermore, the conglomerate

---

<sup>12</sup> Annamarie Jagose, *Queer Theory: An Introduction* (Melbourne University Press) 1996.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

of these factors make up the whole of Fall Out Boy's creative output.<sup>16</sup> The intention of the applied analysis is to consider Fall Out Boy's music as a genealogy of my creative identity.

Like all musical styles, rock music can be generally defined in terms of its implementation of melody, rhythm, and harmony. Likewise, when addressing a specific band's body of works, it is important to frame their musical choices within these three areas to separate what is common, particular to one style, or unique to that group. Fall Out Boy provides an interesting microcosm of the 'rock' genre, as while it adheres to many conventions of the genre it also borrows from other popular music, such as funk, disco, synth-pop, and common practice period music. Thus, the goal of discussing these microscopic matters is to define Fall Out Boy's use of these matters, draw distinctions between what is conventional and unconventional, or queer, within them, and to contextualize the later discussion of macroscopic matters.

### Melody

The foundation of Fall Out Boy's compositional process is the lyrics, and consequently the melody which they produce. In an interview with Zayne Lowe in 2023,

---

<sup>16</sup> Moreover, when defining the semantics of 'conventional' versus 'unconventional,' I am considering the various factors in relation to what is conventional to popular music theory, which are not necessarily considered conventional in common practice music theory.

Pete Wentz and Patrick Stump discussed their writing process in great depth.<sup>17</sup> A Fall Out Boy song begins with Pete sending words to Patrick. When Pete writes the words, he cares about “the meaning of the words” and writes in long phrases, which are not necessarily conducive to the typical “pop” melody.<sup>18</sup> He does not consider melody or text setting but seeks to release thoughts in their most unfiltered form.<sup>19</sup> When Patrick receives these lyrics, he focuses on their rhythm, linear flow, and sound, and begins to construct a melody by playing with the syllabic rhythm.<sup>20</sup> This produces the melodic sound unique to Fall Out Boy – the words are hard to understand and often misheard, but still create catchy and singable melodies. What follows is a careful attempt to decode the DNA of these melodies and the conventions to which they do and do not adhere to. To illustrate the ways they do (and do not) follow these conventions, a deeper examination of the following four elements is helpful: static or stepwise motion and small leaps, use of the diatonic scale, lyric-focused lines, and usage large leaps for syllabic emphasis.

Most Fall Out Boy melodies, liken to many popular music melodies, have a contour that is mostly static and tend to wind around a central tonic and frequently return,

---

<sup>17</sup> “Fall Out Boy: ‘So Much (for) Stardust’ & New Beginnings,” interviewed by Zane Lowe, *Apple Music*, March 23, 2023.


<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.



such as in the chorus of “Fake Out” [audio example 1]. This makes them easy to sing. As exemplified by the first verse of “Hold Me Like a Grudge” [sic] (musical example A) the notes are moving by rapidly but are idiomatic for a singer because they are either static, stepwise, or a small leap.<sup>21</sup> Further, there are no accidentals in this passage; the melody follows the diatonic scale and the notes are supported by the harmonic content of the guitar and bass. These conventions may also be observed in the first verses of “Heartbreak Feels So Good” and “What a Time To Be Alive.” Both examples feature limited melodic motion, fall within the diatonic scale, and furthermore are supported by the harmonies in the guitar and bass (audio examples 2 and 3).

Audio Example 1: “Fake Out” Chorus 

13  
8  
cher-ub rid-ing com-ets through the night sky— Scream-ing at the stars like night lights and I love my life, love my life

16  
8  
run-ning mid-dle fin-gers through the red lights And I guess I'm get-ting ol-der cause I'm less pissed when I can't get on-to the guest list— to the


19  
8  
end of the world, end of the world, fe-ver drem tan-ger-ine sweatWhen I get down down Si-lent kill-ers are these years com - ing like

Musical Example A: Excerpt of Verse 1, “Hold Me Like a Grudge” 

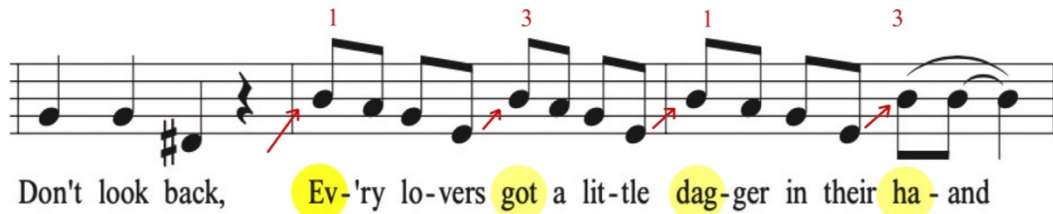
---

<sup>21</sup> Song titles will be capitalized throughout this thesis as they are capitalized on the album’s track listing. This may not always be grammatically correct.


Audio Example 2: “Heartbreak Feels So Good” Verse 1 

Audio Example 3: “What a Time To Be Alive” Verse 1 

Large leaps are mostly reserved for emphasis, barring a few exceptions; this is also conventional in popular music. The chorus of “Love From The Other Side” (musical example B) features the phrase ‘Every lover’s got a little dagger in their hands.’ Four syllables are emphasized in this phrase: ‘ev’, ‘got’, ‘dag’, and ‘ha’. These syllables are emphasized by both their beat position (the strong beats of 1 and 3) and by the approach by upward leap. In the first verse of this same song syllables are emphasized using both upward and downward leaps. As shown in musical example C, the syllables ‘ham’ and ‘pain’ are emphasized by upward leap and their placement on beat 1. The syllables ‘shine’ and ‘time’ are emphasized by downward leap, which follows the natural declamation of the syllable, and are placed on the upbeat of beat 1 – an anticipation, which also serves as a form of emphasis. Leaps for emphasis are also featured in the choruses of “Flu Game” and “The Kintsugi Kid” (audio examples 4 and 5).



The image shows a musical staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of quarter notes and eighth notes. Red arrows point to the first notes of the syllables 'Ev', 'got', 'dag', and 'ha', which are marked with red numbers 1, 3, 1, and 3 respectively above them. The syllables 'Ev', 'got', 'dag', and 'ha' are highlighted in yellow circles. The lyrics are: "Don't look back, Ev-'ry lo-vers got a lit-tle dag-ger in their ha - and".

Musical Example B: Excerpt of chorus of “Love From The Other Side” 

44 know I'm dy - ing out here What would you trade the pain for I'm not sure We were a ham-mer to the sta-tue of Da -

49 - vid We were a pain-ting you could ne-ver frame and You were the sun - shine of my life - time What would you trade

54 the pain for? This ci - ty al - ways hangs a li - ttle bit lone - ly on me loose like a kid play - ing pre - tend

Musical Example C: Excerpt of first verse of “Love From The Other Side”

Audio Example 4: “Flu Game” Chorus

Audio Example 5: “Kintsugi Kid” Chorus

Besides the aforementioned melodic conventions, another device Fall Out Boy frequently employs for melodic emphasis is repetition. Phrases, both musically and lyrically, which are of importance tend to be repeated. In conventional song structure, choruses are repeated verbatim in each iteration; this gives a sense of importance to these sections as well as makes them memorable. On a more microscopic level, within larger sections words and phrases may be repeated. For example, the “I Am My Own Muse” chorus (audio example 6) features a melody repeated twice within the chorus section. Examining a more concentrated example, the “Love From The Other Side” pre-chorus (audio example 7) features phrases which are rapidly repeated: “get the feeling, get the

feeling, don't fight it, fight it." These repeated phrases may also occur over the entire song and even album structure; the question "what would you trade the pain for?" serves as a throughline across the entire album. This question is posed at the end of each verse of "Love From The Other Side" and then returns, ambiguously answered, in the bridge of "So Much (For) Stardust." The repetition of the phrase "what would you trade the pain for?" alludes to the overall album narrative discussed in the chapters to follow.

Audio Example 6: "I Am My Own Muse" Chorus 

Audio Example 7: "Love From The Other Side" Pre-chorus 

Fall Out Boy's music is governed by the lyric and melodic trajectory and all other musical elements exist to support this trajectory. While the general principles of melodic construction, such as intervallic motion, use of the diatonic scale, and lyric-focused lines are conventional, the following section discusses how they break these conventions through metric mixture and unconventional text setting practices.

### Rhythm

As previously mentioned, Fall Out Boy's text setting process is central to their compositional process. As a reflection of the priority Fall Out Boy places on text setting, two particular rhythmic devices hold significant importance: melodic rhythmic devices, including agogic accent, syncopation, meter mixture, and exceptional text setting choices,

and percussion-related rhythmic devices, which considers the relationship of the drum-set figures to the melodic motion and overall song form.

Melodic accents rely more heavily on melodic contour and vocal inflection than on beat placement. Accented notes are most typically approached by upward motion and are longer than the surrounding notes. For example, in the bridge of “So Much (For) Stardust” (musical example D) the accented syllables are ‘life,’ ‘babe,’ ‘sun,’ ‘trade,’ and ‘pain’; these accents are created sometimes by an approach via upward motion, as previously discussed, but always by an agogic accent. The agogic accent is central to the melodic rhythm and flow of phrases, as may be heard in the following excerpts from “The Kintsugi Kid” and “Flu Game” (audio examples 8 and 9). Notice that the most important, and understandable, syllables and words tend to be longer than the surrounding syllables.

65  
In a-no-ther life you were my babe in a-no-ther life You were the sun - shine of my life-time what would you trade the pain for? I'm not sure.

Musical Example D: Excerpt of the bridge of “So Much (For) Stardust”

Audio Example 8: “The Kintsugi Kid” Verse 2

Audio Example 9: “Flu Game” Verse 1

Syncopation and meter mixture are major features of the melodic rhythms.

Syncopation is the more conventional, and common, of these categories throughout Fall

Out Boy’s discography. It may be exemplified in several songs, but a particularly clear example of such is the first verse of “Love From The Other Side” (musical example E). Besides the syllables which occur on beat 1, all the syllables in measures 40-42 occur on upbeat, most of which are anticipations, and measures 43-46 use a mixture of on-beat and anticipated syllabic rhythms. The ‘a’ in the sub-phrase ‘still a modern’ in measure 42 presents an interesting text setting issue. Articles of speech, such as ‘a,’ tend to be treated as unimportant and thus unaccented in text setting. The way ‘a’ has been set in this phrase not only places it on an anticipation, but also creates an agogic accent, as it is an eighth note longer than any of the syllables which come before it.


The musical score for 'Love From The Other Side' includes a vocal line (T), electric guitar (E.Gtr. 1), bass, and double bass (D.S.). The vocal line is marked *mf* and features a complex rhythmic pattern indicated by blue markings above the staff: 1 + + + + + + + + 1 + + + + 2 + + 4 1 + + + 4 1 3 + 4 + + 2 3. The lyrics are: 'Mod-el... house life... melt... down still a... mod-ern... dreamlet - down... It kills me you know I'm... dy - ing out here What would you trade... the pain for'. The guitar part is marked *mp* and the double bass part is marked *p*. The score starts at measure 40.

Musical Example E: Excerpt of verse one of “Love From The Other Side”

Less conventional but equally effective, some syncopations go so far as to give the effect of a mixed meter. Measures 64-67 of “Love From The Other Side” are notated as four bars in 4/4, but the feeling is not that of 4/4. Rather, it is felt as 12/8 + 2/4 + 9/8, as shown in musical example F. As further revealed in this excerpt, the melodic line and

harmonic instruments are juxtaposed with the drum set, which remains in a 4/4 pattern. The drum set is a key feature of both syncopation and meter mixture, as without this backbone these features may be less perceivable and thus less effective.

The musical score consists of five staves. The top staff is the vocal line with lyrics: "I'd ne-ver go I just want to be in - vi - ted oh Got to get up". Above the vocal line, a red bracket spans the first four measures, labeled "12/8". A second red bracket spans the next three measures, labeled "2/4". A third red bracket spans the final two measures, labeled "9/8". The piano accompaniment is shown in the second and third staves. The drum set is shown in the bottom staff, with 'x' marks indicating drum hits. The score is marked with a large '4' on the left side.

Musical Example F: Excerpt of pre-chorus of “Love From The Other Side” 

Another fascinating text setting practice is that sometimes the musical phrases do not align with the lyrical phrases. Oftentimes in popular music the text flows as one would speak it. However, as musical example G shows, which contains an excerpt of the first verse of “Love From The Other Side,” the first phrase ends with the first word of the second phrase, breaking the lyrical phrases in an unexpected place. In this particular example, the misaligned text setting serves two purposes. It allows for a rhyme: ‘loose’ rhymes with ‘suit;’ had they broken the phrase after ‘me’ (the logical end to the clause),

there would not be a rhyme. It also skews the interpretation of these lyrics and allows for greater freedom of semantic interpretation. Is the city loose, the suit, or both, or are they more lonely than loose? How can a city hang loose? Breaking the lyrical phrase is one of the main reasons Fall Out Boy’s lyrics are often misheard: because the brain tries to group words into sentences, when a phrase is broken in a strange place it interrupts that process. This instability provides a subtle emotionally uncomfortable effect. Similarly, the prose is unconventionally broken by the musical phrase in “Heartbreak Feels So Good” with the phrases “But could we please pretend this won’t end?” and “Light from a screen of messages unsent.”

55 This ci - ty al - ways hangs a li - ttle bit lone - ly on me loose

59 like a kid play - ing — pre - tend in his fa - ther's suit

Musical Example G: Excerpt of first verse of “Love From The Other Side” 

With few exceptions, Fall Out Boy’s music is felt in 4/4 and occurs over a 4-beat framework. As with virtually all popular music since the 1950s, the kick drum is placed on strong beats, the snare drum is placed on weak beats, and either the hi-hat or the ride cymbal subdivides the beats. This is perfectly exemplified by the groove of “Hold Me Like a Grudge” (audio example 10). What qualifies as a strong or weak beat is dependent on the individual song’s groove. Some songs, such as “Hold Me Like a Grudge,” have



strongest beats as 1 and 3 and weaker beats as 2 and 4. Others, such as “Heaven, Iowa,” use a more equal emphasis among all four beats (audio example 11). This also may shift within songs, such as in “I Am My Own Muse,” in which the stronger beats of the drum groove during the chorus are 1 and 3, but the stronger beats of the drum groove in the verses are 1, 2, 3, and 4.

Audio Example 10: “Hold Me Like a Grudge” Groove 

Audio Example 11: “Heaven, Iowa” Groove 

The drum-set figures are yet another avenue for accenting important melodic notes. Accents, regardless of beat placement, often reinforced by the crash cymbal, sometimes the snare drum or kick drum; the most emphatic accents often have a combination of these three elements. On a macroscopic level, accents occur at the beginning of formal sections and at cadential points; on a microscopic level, they may be used to begin or end a phrase, or to emphasize important syllables. For example, in the chorus of “So Much (For) Stardust” (musical example H) the crash cymbal is sounded on the syllables ‘so’, ‘for’, ‘star’, ‘we’, and ‘all’. ‘For’ and ‘we,’ particularly, do not fall on naturally strong beats and are not accented by the melodic motion, thus they rely on the crash cymbal to support their accent. It is worth noting as well that in this instance the kick drum is used in tandem with the crash cymbal for the syllables ‘so’, ‘for’, ‘star’, ‘we’, the snare drum is used for the first ‘all’, and all three elements – crash cymbal, kick

drum, and snare drum – accent the final ‘all.’ This creates a hierarchy within the accented syllables of least to most important melodic points. The hierarchy informs the interpretation of the phrase – if it were inverted and the final ‘all’ were the least emphasized it might change the interpretation of both the musical and lyrical phrase.

The image displays a musical score for the chorus of "So Much (For) Stardust". The score includes parts for B♭ Trumpet 1 and 2, Trombone 1, Tenor Saxophone, Electric Guitar 1 and 2, Bass, Drum Set, and Piano. The lyrics are: "So much for Star - dust ... We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all." The score features a complex rhythmic structure with mixed meter and misaligned text setting. The drum set part is highlighted with yellow 'x' marks on the snare and hi-hat, indicating accents on the final 'all'.

Musical Example H: Excerpt of the chorus of “So Much (For) Stardust”

The rhythmic elements of both the melody and supporting voices serve the overall lyrical and melodic trajectory. The use of mixed meter and misaligned text setting stand out as unconventional means of composition. The drum set further supports the melodic

features both through its role in juxtaposing syncopations and through its role of highlighting important melodic points and creating hierarchy within the melodic points.

### Harmony

The primary function of harmony in Fall Out Boy's music is to support the melodic content. The secondary function is to support the formal structures, which are also influenced by the melodic content. It is imperative to understand that the harmonic function is not necessarily determined by the chord itself but rather how that chord is interacting with the phrase. According to Nobile, both pre-dominant and dominant functions may be served by any diatonic chord, including the tonic, in rock music.<sup>22</sup> The tonic function must include the tonic chord but may be prolonged by any number of harmonies.<sup>23</sup> It is also worth noting that this style of music is not written to intentionally adhere to the harmonic functions, as common practice period music is more likely to be. Rather, ascribing harmonic functions to the harmonic motion of the songs helps to describe what the motions are, how the harmonies relate to each other, the role of cadences, and the overall song structures.

---

<sup>22</sup> Drew Nobile, "Harmonic Function in Rock Music," *Journal of Music Theory* 60, no. 2 (2016).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

Before further discussion of the harmonic functions, it is important to understand that chord qualities are often ambiguous in rock music, as the ‘power chord’ is the primary harmonic vehicle. A power chord is comprised of a root note in octaves and the fifth between them and must include distortion to be considered as such; the overtones created via the distortion create the required ambiguous sonic quality by sounding both a major and minor third.<sup>24</sup> This is akin to the tradition of the blues, of which rock is derived from. The blues scale includes both the major and minor third, which allows for the same tonal ambiguity that is encapsulated in the power chord. Some scholars argue that all power chords should be considered major chords; however, I aim to highlight the inherent ambiguity in my analysis through the superscript ‘P’ (ex. F<sup>P</sup> is an F power chord, and in roman numerals, V<sup>P</sup> is representing that it is serving the role of a ‘V’ chord but the quality is indeterminate).<sup>25</sup> Occasionally the implied quality of these harmonies may be inferred through the expected quality within the key and the quality of any thirds in the melody if they are present, but are generally regarded as intentionally ambiguous.

To illustrate these functions and the effects of the ambiguous power chord, consider the chorus of “Love From The Other Side” (musical example I), of which the harmonic rhythm is one chord per measure and the harmony clearly supports the melody. The passage, starting at measure 80, obviously begins on tonic, and the harmonies in

---

<sup>24</sup> Esa Lilja, “Harmonic Function and Modality in Classic Heavy Metal,” *Metal Music Studies* 5, no. 3 (2019).

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

measures 81-82 clearly serve to prolong the tonic. Measure 83 moves to the IV<sup>P</sup> chord, which may conventionally serve as a predominant, however aurally and structurally this chord is still prolonging the tonic. Rather, the following VI serves as the predominant, the V the dominant, and the i returns to tonic. This is due to the overall phrase structure and the aural perception of the harmonic functions, which may be split into two, four, or eight groups, as shown in figure 1.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
i	V/III	III	IV	VI	V	i	V	i	V/III	III	IV	VI	V	i	i	
T				PD		D		T				PD		D		T

Figure 1: Phrase Structure of “Love From The Other Side” Chorus

The harmonic functions tend to fit within these sub-phrases and tend not to overlap and create non-symmetrical harmonic motion. Inspecting the second 8 bars of the chorus, measures 80-88, the tonic function occupies the first 4 bars, predominant and dominant occupy 5-6, and tonic returns for 7-8. However, even within this interpretation, the IV<sup>P</sup> chord is serving an interesting role, as it does aurally obscure the exact progression of the harmonic functions, as well as the major/minor quality of the functions, and thus the motion of the phrase as a whole unit.

76 C B Em B HC Em D<sup>5</sup> G<sup>7</sup>

— a-bout snapped Don't look back, Ev-'ry lo-vers got a lit-tle dag-ger in their ha-and Love from the oth-er si-de of the a-po-ca-lypse

76 VI PD V i V i V<sup>7</sup>/III III<sup>p</sup>

87 A<sup>p</sup> C B PAC Em

— And I just a-bout snapped Don't look back, Ev-'ry lov-ers got a lit-tle dag-ger in their ha-ands

87 IV<sup>p</sup> VI PD V i

87 *pp* — *mf*

Musical Example I: Excerpt of the chorus of “Love From The Other Side”

Cadences, in the context of rock music, represent the “conclusion of a large-scale formal and harmonic trajectory” and are linked to the functional circuit.<sup>26</sup> Cadences may


<sup>26</sup> Drew Nobile, “Harmonic Function in Rock Music.”

project formal closure without standard V-I voice leading and must be the end of something with a beginning and a middle.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, I define the cadential points not only based on the underlying harmonic functions but also by the formal structure, phrase structure, and melodic arc. For example, the first verse of “I Am My Own Muse” (musical example J) includes very little harmonic support for the melody besides an ostinato in the guitar and a brief contrapuntal passage in the violin. However, the half-way point of this section constitutes a half-cadence due to the fact it is the half-way point, the change in instrumentation and subdivision, and the return of the first melodic phrase. It may also be retro-actively examined as a half cadence, as the second verse, which has more harmonic support, has a more clearly harmonically defined half cadence. Thus, because large formal sections tend to be parallel, it can be assumed that there is a half cadence at the half-way point of the first verse as well. Frequently throughout Fall Out Boy’s discography a harmonically defined cadence may be absent, but a point may still be considered cadential due to its context and location within the greater form. The opposite is also true – a harmonic progression may appear to cadence, but if it does not align with an end point of the form, or if it does not fit in the context, it is not considered a cadential event.

---

<sup>27</sup> Drew Nobile, “Harmonic Function in Rock Music.”

The image shows a musical score for the song "I Am My Own Muse". It includes staves for Tenors 1 and 2 (T1, T2), Piccolo (Picc.), Flute (Fl.), Bass Clarinet (Bn. Cl.), Electric Guitar 1 (E.Gtr. 1), Double Bass (D.S.), and Violin 1 (Vln. 1). The score is in 4/4 time and features lyrics such as "Here I am not sure you should take a chance" and "I like play - ing dumb let - ting you fig - ure it out". Dynamic markings include *mf*, *pp*, and *pp*. A red "HC" marking is present above the T1 staff.

Musical Example J: Excerpt of the first verse of “I Am My Own Muse” 

Perhaps the most shocking discovery I made throughout my analysis is that some songs are tonally ambiguous and/or bitonal. “So Much (For) Stardust” is an enigma of the previously mentioned harmonic conventions, as it could be interpreted either as in the key of G minor with a dominant pedal throughout, or as in the key of D minor with an excessive use of IV; both interpretations include unconventional uses of chords in relation to their function. It could also be, and is most likely best interpreted as, a song with no true tonal center. This use of multiple tonal centers, or a complete lack of tonal center, does not align with Nobile’s definitions of harmonic functions in rock music and is highly unconventional. While the interpretation may change the cadential analysis, it does not have a bearing on the overall form, which is primarily determined by the melodic and phrase structure. “So Much (For) Stardust” operates in a unique way that does not align with the norms of the genre. The choice to include a tonally ambiguous



song, especially as the title track and final song of the album, is bold and an unconventional compositional choice.

One manifestation of harmonic ambiguity is demonstrated in the relation to the interludes and verses of “So Much (For) Stardust.” These all feature a D pedal in the left hand piano throughout. These sections, as well as the introduction, feature cadences in D. While the G minor chord is first in the harmonic cycle of the interludes and verses, consisting of Gm-Dm-C#dim-Dm, I believe that this is one of the aforementioned IV chords and that it serves both to obscure the “tonic” of this section and to tease the upcoming G tonal center. Interestingly, as discussed earlier, the IV harmony in “Love From The Other Side” also fulfills a tonally obscuring role. The melody of the verses begins and centers around D pitches and ends on an A – the V of D. Musical example K illustrates the use of D and A as tonal signifiers, highlight the use of the D pedal, and show a comparative analysis of the roman numerals in G versus D tonalities. It is worth noting that the roman numeral analysis could fit in either key, but the melodic pitches tend to align better with D tonality. Thus, because these sections all have identical harmonic content and parallel structures, all sections featuring the Gm-Dm-C#dim-Dm harmonic cycle are primarily grounded in D tonality but are obscured by the Gm chord.

The image displays a musical score for the song "So Much (For) Stardust". It includes parts for three B♭ Trumpets (Tpt. 1, 2, 3), two Trombones (Tbn. 1, 2), a Tenor Saxophone (T), a Drums (D.S.), Piano (Pno.), and Electric Guitar (E.Gtr. 1). The score is in G major and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: "I'm in a win-ter mood... Dream-ing of spring now Burn-ing my-self down burn-ing my-self down, burn-ing. I feel like some-thing bad's been stretched out o-ver and o-ver a-gain Un-til I'm creased and I'm 'bout to break down the mid-dle split me right down the mid-dle right right down the mid-dle yeah". Chord annotations in pink and blue are provided for the piano and guitar parts, including Gm, Dm, C#dim., and various figured bass notations like G: i, D: iv, vii°/v, and vii°.

Musical Example K: Excerpt of verse one of “So Much (For) Stardust”

The chorus’s primary tonal center is G, as shown in musical example L. I determine this due to the V-I motion which occurs in both measures 30-31, the half-way point of the section, and 34-35, the end of the section. The strong tonicization of G in the


choruses leads me to define their primary tonal center as G. Across the large form of the song, this may be interpreted as long V pedals building towards the choruses, which finally but briefly resolves to G.

The image displays a musical score for the chorus of "So Much (For) Stardust". The score is arranged for a full band and includes the following parts:

- Brass:** B♭ Trumpet 1 & 2, and Trombone 1.
- Woodwinds:** Tenor Saxophone (T).
- String Section:** Electric Guitar 1 & 2, Electric Bass (E.B.), and Double Bass (D.S.).
- Piano (Pno):** Grand piano accompaniment.
- Vocals:** Lead vocal line with lyrics.

The score is divided into two systems, each starting at measure 56. The first system covers measures 56-59, and the second system covers measures 60-63. The lyrics for the first system are: "So much for Star - dust we thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all...". The lyrics for the second system are: "So much for Star - dust — We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all...".


Chord annotations are provided above the brass and piano parts. In the first system, chords are Gm, Dm, C, F, D<sup>7</sup>/F<sup>#</sup>, and HC. In the second system, chords are Gm, Dm, C, F, D<sup>7</sup>/F<sup>#</sup>, Gm PAC, and V<sup>7</sup>. Roman numerals (i, v, V<sup>7</sup>/VII, VII, V<sup>7</sup>, i) are also present below the piano part in the second system.

Musical Example L: Chorus of "So Much (For) Stardust" 

The pre-chorus (musical example M) is ambiguous within itself, and seemingly serves as an opportunity both to connect the stronger tonal sections and to further obscure the tonal center of the song as a whole. The comparative roman numeral analysis reveals that if G is the tonal center the III serves as the dominant and the IV serves as the predominant, and that if D is the tonal center the VI serves as the dominant and the VII serves as the predominant. Either of these analyses could be supported, but regardless, the chords used in their respective functions (despite the IV) are quite unconventional. The pre-chorus, however, functions to resolve to the chorus, just as the dominant functions to resolve to the tonic. Thus, the pre-chorus serves the dual purpose of setting up a ‘dominant’ function to lead to the ‘tonic’ of the chorus while also prolonging the ‘dominant’ pedal set up by the verse.

The musical score for the pre-chorus of "So Much (For) Stardust" is presented in a multi-staff format. The top staff is the vocal line (T) with lyrics: "Life is just a game, may - be I'm stuck in a lone - ly loop my ha - by". Above the vocal line, five chords are indicated in pink: Bb, C, Bb, C, and Bb. Below the vocal line, the guitar parts (E.Gtr. 1, E.Gtr. 2, E.B., and D.S.) are shown. The piano part (Pno.) is at the bottom. At the bottom of the piano part, a Roman numeral analysis is provided for each measure, with two possible tonal centers: G (orange) and D (blue). The analysis is as follows:

Measure	G Tonal Center	D Tonal Center
1	III	VI
2	IV	VII
3	III	VI
4	IV PD	VII
5	III D	VI

Musical Example M: Pre-chorus of “So Much (For) Stardust” 

Similarly, the bridge does not fit entirely in either tonality, which is truly bitonal. Musical example N shows that the D pedal is present, and the harmonies oscillate between both G-based and D-based chords, with the occasional F-based chord. If not for the D pedal, the bridge might more clearly fit within the G tonality, and without the F-based chords, it may more clearly fit within the D tonality. The final F-based chord of the bridge may be interpreted as the V of the first chord of the succeeding pre-chorus, Bb, which I earlier defined as serving dual functions in this section; the use of the F to pivot to Bb creates an IAC between these sections. Regardless, the functionally ambiguous harmonies in the bridge do not fully support either tonal center. The harmonic choices are aurally perceived as a bitonal section, which analytically supports the interpretation that the song as a whole is bitonal.

65 *Gm* *mf* *Dm/A* *Gm* *F/A* *Gm*

T In a-no-ther life you were my babe in a-no-ther life You were the sun - shine of my life-time what would you trade the pain for? I'm not sure. In a-no-ther life you were my

E.B.

65 *mp*  
*p*

D. S.

Pno.

*D Ped*

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

70 *Dm/A* *Gm* *F/A*

T babe in a - no - ther life you were the sun - shine of my life - time what would you trade the pain for? I'm not sure. \_\_\_\_

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

E.B.

70

D. S.

Pno.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Musical Example N: Bridge of “So Much (For) Stardust”

One of the most frequent critiques of the album is that it ends inconclusively; there is no final cadence.<sup>28</sup> “So Much (For) Stardust” is the only song on the album that fully fades out. Pragmatically, the choice not to cadence in a bitonal work makes sense – it makes it so that the interpretation cannot be fit concretely in one key, and I cannot help but admire this choice. Both narratively and musically the lack of final cadence serves the greater whole of the album.

Harmony, in the context of Fall Out Boy’s discography, primarily serves to support the melody and thus overall narrative of the music, and secondarily supports the formal structures of the songs and album. Fall Out Boy makes some unconventional and interesting harmonic choices, most poignant of which are the tonal ambiguities in “So Much (For) Stardust”. Entirely tonally ambiguous and inconclusive songs are rare in the rock genre, and the choice to make this the title track and final track creates interesting implications on the narrative of the entire album.

The microscopic elements of Fall Out Boy’s compositions, including melody, rhythm, and harmony, reveal how their music fits within the larger ‘rock’ canon, and which conventions they adhere to and avoid. Fall Out Boy’s song lyrics, and their

---

<sup>28</sup> Aliya Chaudhry, “Review: Fall Out Boy’s So Much (for) Stardust Isn’t a Comeback – it’s an Expansion,” *Alternative Press*, March 24, 2023.



resulting melodies, are the foundation of their music. As revealed through analysis and discussion, these melodies largely adhere to the conventions of the rock genre, as they employ static motion, diatonic scales, and large leaps for emphasis. Rhythmically, they exhibit conventional use of syncopation, but also utilize unconventional text setting practices and meter mixture. Harmonically, Fall Out Boy's music primarily supports the melody, but the use of the power chords and atypical chord choices leads to tonal ambiguity, best exemplified by "So Much (For) Stardust." The mixing of conventional and unconventional musical choices creates the Fall Out Boy sound, which is undeniably rock based, but is also a unique manifestation of many musical influences.

## **CHAPTER 2 – MACROSCOPIC ELEMENTS OF *SO MUCH (FOR) STARDUST*: FORM, ORCHESTRATION, AND CULTURAL MATTERS**

The macroscopic elements of Fall Out Boy's music can be broken roughly into two main categories: musical and cultural matters. The musical matters include form, instrument choice, and genre, and the cultural matters include lyrical content, narrative, criticism, and cultural influences. Many of these elements divert from conventions of the overall rock genre, some in subtle ways, and others in a more overt fashion. Because Fall Out Boy takes great influence from the musicians who came before them, and from the culture by which they are surrounded, it would not be correct to claim that they are entirely unique or original compared to other music and musical trends. Rather, they synthesize and react to many conventions and influences by either leaning towards or away from them. The result of these reactions produces the inherently unique sound that comes from creating original music.

### **Form**

The dominant form of popular music is song structure, which Fall Out Boy tends to utilize in conventional ways. While the principal elements of any popular song are the presence of verses and choruses, secondary sections often include the pre-chorus and bridge, and sometimes intro, outro, and interlude. A form diagram of "So Good Right

Now” (figure 2) illustrates conventional use of all of these elements within a single song. Typically, the large-scale formal order is V-PC-C. A pre-chorus always signals that a chorus is coming, not unlike the harmonic function PD signals that D is coming. Obviously, an intro must be the first large formal unit and the outro must be last, and interludes are used to connect the space between V-PC-C progressions. The bridge is the most malleable of the large formal units. It typically comes approximately two-thirds of the way through a song, but this is essentially the only rule about its placement within the song structure; the bridge also tends to occupy a different temporary tonal center. The form of songs is, unsurprisingly, influenced by the lyrics and melody; the lyric groupings and repetitions determine the overall structure, and the instrumental music adheres to the structure. Song structures are largely interchangeable, all iterations that include at least one verse and one chorus may be considered a song.

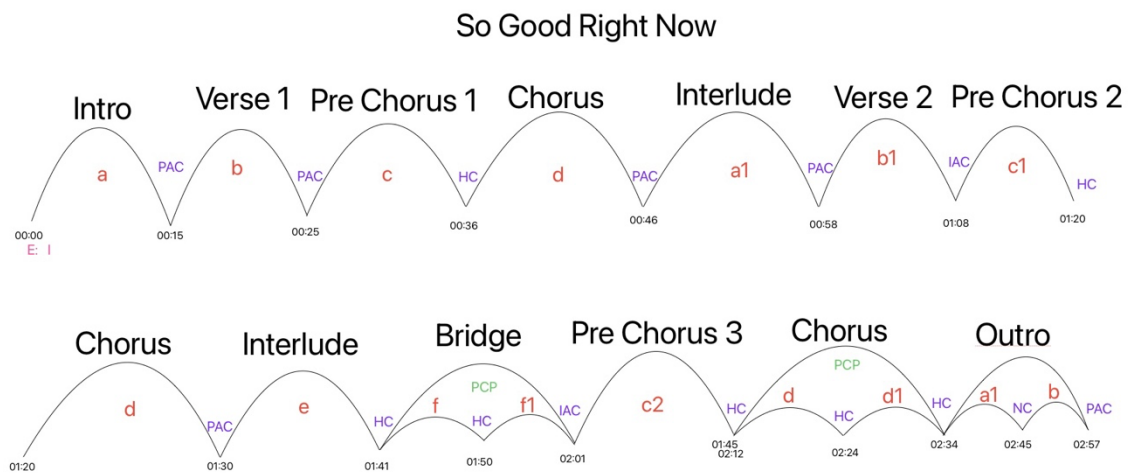


Figure 2: “So Good Right Now” Form Diagram

A quite unconventional matter in the structure of *So Much (For) Stardust* is that there are two tracks on the album that are not in song structure, rather, they are through-composed. Typically, all tracks on a rock album use song structure; these two tracks are a great diversion from the norm. Both tracks may be loosely described as orchestrated spoken word compositions. The first, “The Pink Seashell,” is a soundbite of an Ethan Hawke monologue from the 1994 film *Reality Bites*.<sup>29</sup> The second, “Baby Annihilation,” is a poem read by its poet, Pete Wentz. These two tracks are each only about a minute long and serve as interludes on the album. Both tracks are interesting and exciting firsts for Fall Out Boy. “The Pink Seashell” is the first use of a soundbite from a film in an album, and the first instance words are being used that weren’t written by a band member (and aren’t covers). While previous albums include some spoken word segments by Wentz, they are all incorporated into songs; “Baby Annihilation” is the first time that a spoken word poem has its own track and underlying composition. This is the first time that Wentz has performed spoken word on an album since *Folie a Deux* in 2008. Furthermore, both these tracks are the first through-composed works to be featured on a Fall Out Boy album.

Typical Fall Out Boy song structures always include verses and choruses, and (most times) pre-choruses and bridges. The three main structures Fall Out Boy employs in a verse are a single phrase, or ‘a’, two different phrases, ‘ab’, or two parallel phrases,

---

<sup>29</sup> *Reality Bites*, directed by Ben Stiller (Universal Studios, 1994).

‘aa<sup>1</sup>’; they almost never have greater than two phrases in a verse throughout their discography, and never do so in *So Much (For) Stardust*. Phrases within verses are always separated by cadences. These are usually half cadences, but sometimes imperfect authentic cadences. Verses always end with a cadence, which is usually a HC or IAC, and occasionally a PAC. As implied by these cadences, the verses usually center around the tonic of the entire song, but sometimes center around the dominant. Verses are usually parallel to one another and contain different lyrics but similar or identical melodies and rhythms, and almost always identical harmonies, cadences, and phrase structures.

An exceptional verse is the second verse of “I Am My Own Muse.” As shown in figure 3, it adheres to many of the conventions mentioned above: the phrase structure is an ‘ab’ structure with an HC between the phrases, and the verses end with IACs. But, the second verse includes a phrase extension; the only one in a verse on this album.

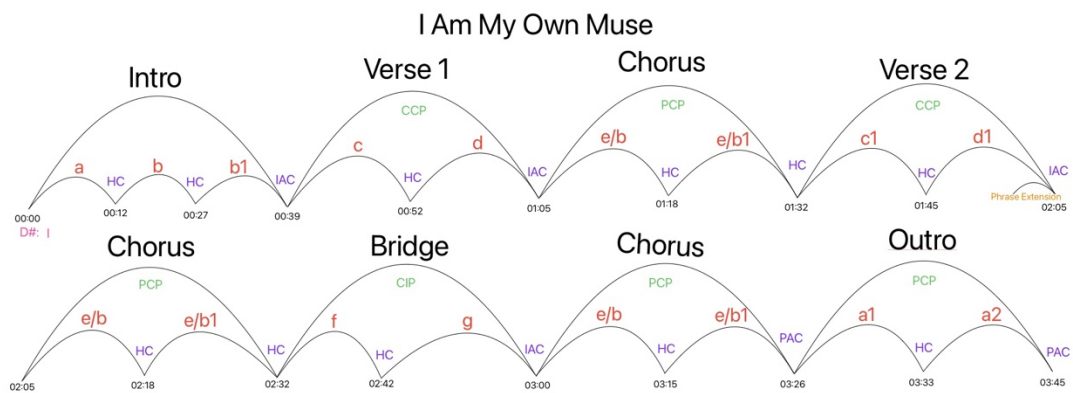


Figure 3: “I Am My Own Muse” Form Diagram

In Fall Out Boy’s music the chorus section typically contains two phrases. The form is either repetitive, whether that is a literal repeat or ‘aa<sup>1</sup>’ or, more frequently, contrasting ‘ab.’ Choruses are often all identical, but sometimes the final chorus is different, whether through added melodic embellishments, lengthened phrases, or more repeats within a section. Some examples of modified final choruses are found in “Heaven, Iowa,” “Heartbreak Feels So Good,” and “Flu Game,” figures 4, 5, and 6. Choruses may have a half cadence or imperfect authentic cadence between the two phrases, but almost always end with a perfect authentic cadence.

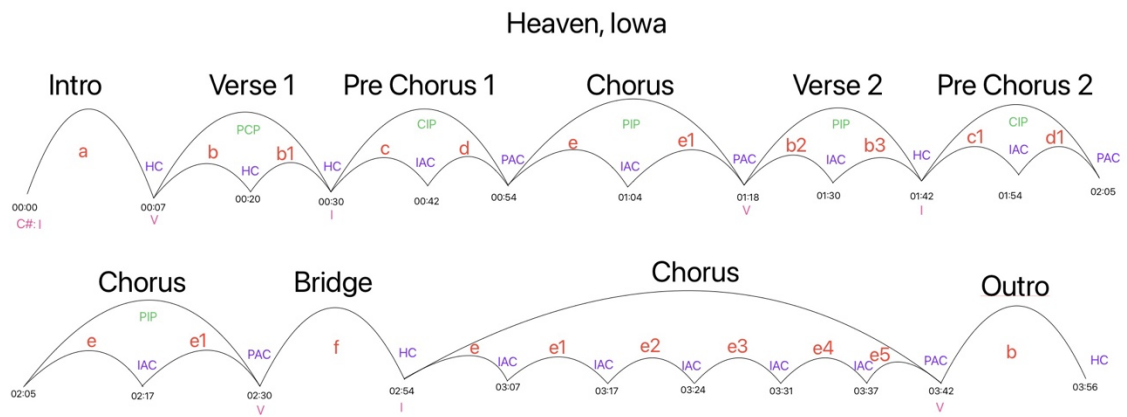


Figure 4: “Heaven, Iowa” Form Diagram

## Heartbreak Feels So Good

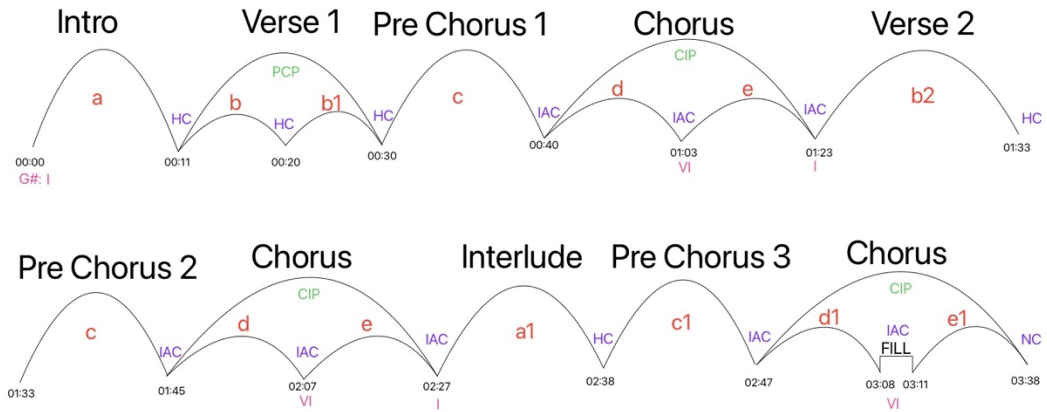


Figure 5: “Heartbreak Feels So Good” Form Diagram

## Flu Game

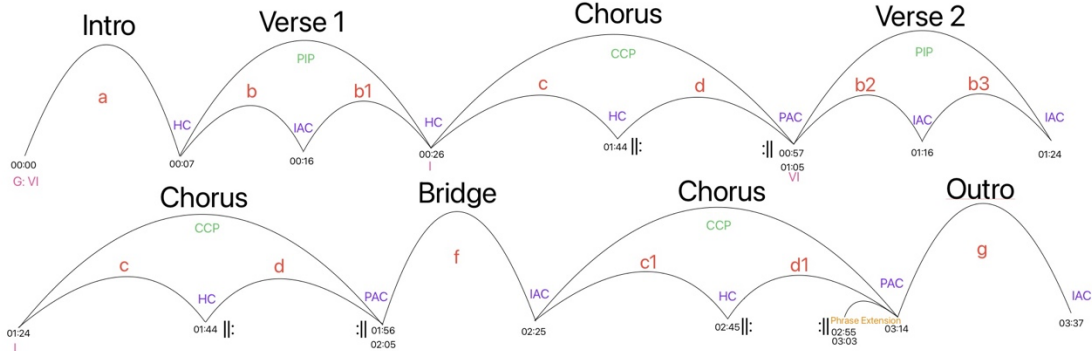


Figure 6: “Flu Game” Form Diagram

Pre-choruses are similar to verses in their structure but tend to have a greater pull towards the chorus. Most commonly pre-choruses are made up of only one phrase, ‘a,’ but sometimes have two phrases separated by an HC or IAC. They almost always end

with an HC or IAC to transition into the chorus. Pre-choruses must always be preceded by a verse and followed by a chorus, otherwise, they would be perceived as another verse.

Bridges are the most flexible of all the sections in terms of structure. They may have any number of phrases; in *So Much (For) Stardust* this ranges from one to three. The cadences are also the most flexible, as within the phrase it is rare to use a PAC, but the section may end with an HC, IAC, or PAC. The bridge often references or reiterates previous material, but through an alternate narrative lens.

Fall Out Boy typically employs conventional song structures in their music. A notable deviation from this norm on *So Much (For) Stardust* is the inclusion of two through-composed tracks, “The Pink Seashell” and “Baby Annihilation.” In their typical song structure, choruses contain two phrases, but vary in repetition and structure. Pre-choruses act as transitions to the chorus and are preceded by verses. Bridges are the most flexible section, and often provide a musical and narrative break from the rest of the song. Fall Out Boy’s song structures exhibit both conventional and unconventional elements, which contributes to their overall sound and style.



## Genre and Instrumentation

One of the most unique things about Fall Out Boy, which they have been both praised and criticized for in the media, is that they do not have a ‘trademark sound.’<sup>30</sup> Those who criticize their genre ambiguity claim that they are ‘selling out,’ unconvincing in their execution of genre mixture, and in some ways disgracing the rock tradition.<sup>31</sup> Those in support of their genre ambiguity praise their ability to seamlessly integrate non-rock genres into rock-based instrumentation and their uncanny ability to push the frontier of eclectic genre mixture in mainstream popular music.<sup>32</sup> Their initial genre intention was to be a hardcore punk group, which then melded into emo and pop punk, and their style now exists as an indefinite alternative rock sound.<sup>33</sup> Their ‘trademark’ is their lack of adherence to any particular genre. While their music may mostly be broadly defined as ‘alternative rock,’ each album has a completely different sound, and often borrows instruments and musical material from other genres, including electropop, hip-hop, EDM, and classical. *So Much (For) Stardust* has been coined their ‘theatrical rock’ album for its

---

<sup>30</sup> Briony Edwards, “Who are Fall Out Boy in 2018?” *Louder*, January 15, 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Brittany Spanos, “Review: Fall Out Boy Show Off Their Tightest Hooks on ‘So Much (for) Stardust’,” *Rolling Stone*, March 29, 2023; and Jordan Sargent, “Fall Out Boy Want To Be Your Gateway Drug,” *SPIN*, April 26, 2013.

<sup>32</sup> Briony Edwards, “Who are Fall Out Boy in 2018?” *Louder*, January 15, 2018; and Aliya Chaudrhy, “Review: Fall Out Boy’s *So Much (For) Stardust* isn’t a comeback—it’s an expansion,” *Alternative Press*, March 24, 2023.


<sup>33</sup> Joe Trohman, *None of This Rocks* (New York: Hachette Books, 2022).

rock roots that employ power ballads, funk, disco, and a full orchestra, as well as their ever-iconic lyricism. Figure 7 shows my analysis of the many genres Fall Out Boy borrows from throughout the album.

Song	Genre(s)	Instrumentation	Quotations/References
Love from the Other Side	Alternative Rock	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set, Clarinet, Violin Section, Viola Section, Cello Section, Double Bass Section	Statue of David
Heartbreak Feels so Good	Alternative Rock/Pop Rock	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set, Synthesizer	"Nope" (Jordan Peele)
Hold Me Like a Grudge	Alternative Rock/Funk	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set	
Fake Out	Pop Rock	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set, Synthesizer	
Heaven, Iowa	Power Ballad	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set	"Chicago Is So Two Years Ago;" <i>A Star Is Born</i> (version not specified), "Moonlight Sonata"
So Good Right Now	Pop Rock/R&B	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set	"Little Bitty Pretty One" – Bobby Day
The Pink Seashell	Orchestrated Spoken Word	Spoken Vocals, Ambient Sounds, Guitar, Synthesizer, Nondescript String Orchestra, Nondescript Horn Section	<i>Reality Bites</i> (Ben Stiller)
I am My Own Muse	Power Ballad	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set, Piccolo, Flute, Clarinet, Bassoon, Trumpet, F Horn, Trombone, Tuba, Violin Section, Viola Section, Cello Section, Double Bass Section	Frida Kahlo
Flu Game	Alternative Rock	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set	Van Gogh
Baby Annihilation	Orchestrated Spoken Word	Spoken Vocals, Ambient Sounds, Synthesizer	
The Kinstugi Kid	Alternative Rock	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set	"Sugar We're Going Down," the Ramones
What a Time to be Alive	Soul Punk, Disco	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set, Violin Section, Horn Section (trumpets, trombones, saxophones)	"Disloyal Order of Water Buffalos"
So Much (for) Stardust	Alternative Rock	Vocals, 2 Guitars, Bass, Drum set, 3 Trumpets, 2 Trombones, Piano, Violin Section, Viola Section, Cello Section, Double Bass Section, Gospel Choir	References previous songs on album (see Fig. 8); Title track

Figure 7: Comprehensive genre analysis of *So Much (For) Stardust*, including aurally perceived genre, instrumentation, and quotations.

A large component of genre perception is instrumentation choice. Something unique for an alternative rock group in 2023 is the use of non-synthesized classical instruments. Patrick said that he only wanted to write this music if he could use a real orchestra, not synthesized orchestra sounds.<sup>34</sup> There is a real tangibility to the music that Fall Out Boy and their producer, Neil Avron, sought to (and successfully did) convey in the album.<sup>35</sup> Not only is an orchestra a rarity in a rock album, particularly in the punk subgenre, but a live orchestra is especially unique to this record. The only song which uses the full orchestra is “I Am My Own Muse,” as heard in audio example 12. Isolated orchestral instruments, such as strings, horns, and clarinet are featured in “Love From The Other Side,” “The Pink Seashell,” “What a Time To Be Alive,” and “So Much (For) Stardust.”

Audio Example 12: Orchestra in “I Am My Own Muse” 

Fall Out Boy’s distinctiveness lies in their lack of a ‘signature sound,’ a quality which, as previously discussed, has garnered both praise and criticism in the media. While their original sound was based in the Chicago hardcore-punk scene, it has evolved into something much greater and culminated in the theatrical rock sound of *So Much*

---

<sup>34</sup> Fall Out Boy, interviewed by *New Musical Express*, March 25, 2023.

<sup>35</sup> Pete Wentz, interviewed by Zach Sang on *The Zach Sang Show*, April 6, 2023.

*(For) Stardust*. This album received positive critical reception on the musical charts. Album reviews, while generally positive, reflect mixed reactions, ranging from praising the grandiose nature to criticizing the use of a ‘pop style.’ *So Much (For) Stardust* is a nostalgic album, considered to be the sequel to *Folie a Deux*, while taking lyric inspiration from the *Infinity on High* era.

### Lyrics, Narrative, and Cultural Influences

Pete Wentz is often regarded as one of the best lyricists of the 21st century.<sup>36</sup> They are always raw and rarely mince words regarding mental health struggles, cultural events, and his general outlook on life. The earlier Fall Out Boy albums – particularly *From Under The Cork Tree* and *Infinity On High* – feature lyrics concerning suicidal ideation, depressive and manic episodes, and other mental health struggles.<sup>37</sup> This album, while often cynical, is less direct in its rage and sadness. The two tracks which are thematically most similar to their early work are “Fake Out” and “The Kintsugi Kid.” These songs discuss self-doubt (“Do you laugh about me whenever I leave? Or do I still

---

<sup>36</sup> Neda Ulaby, “Fall Out Boy Rewrites the Gender Roles of Rock,” *National Public Radio*, November 30, 2007.

<sup>37</sup> Fall Out Boy, *From Under the Cork Tree*, Released May 3, 2005, recorded November 2004-January 2005, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio; and *Infinity on High*, Released February 6, 2007, recorded December 2005-October 2006, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.

need more therapy?”), drug abuse, (“I spent ten years in a bitter chemical haze”), and difficult past experiences. The major narrative themes throughout *So Much (For) Stardust* are the passage of time and interpersonal relationships.

The passage of time is a major narrative theme throughout this album, which manifests itself both through musical choices and lyrics. Lyrically, this is shown both subtly, such as through the liberal use of past tense and reflection on past events. It is revealed most overtly, though, in the following lyrical lines, listed in order of appearance:

“You were the sunshine of my lifetime”

“It was an uphill battle but they didn’t know”

“When you ask how I’ve been I know you mean well”

“I thought I knew better, I thought it would get better, I figured somehow by now I would have got it together”

“We did for futures that never came and for pasts that we’re never gonna change”

“Scar crossed lovers, forever, here we are untouched forever, I’m saving this all for later”

“Twist the knife again like we did last summer”

“I guess to you now I’m just a face in the crowd”

“Last night I dreamt I still knew you”

“Someday no one will remember me when they look back”

“Time is luck and I wish ours overlapped more, or for longer”

“I spent ten years in a bit of a chemical haze and I miss the way that I felt nothing”

“Passed my old street, the house I grew up in, it breaks your heart but for of the Ramones are dead”

“Sometimes you wonder if we’re ever looking back at a picture of two-thousand nineteen, and saying ‘that’s the way, the world it used to be,’ before our dreams started bursting at the seams”

“In another life you were the sunshine of my lifetime”

“So much for stardust, we thought we had it all.”<sup>38</sup>

There are musical references to many former eras and popular genres. Working backwards, the early 2000’s are referenced through lyrical references to their own songs: “Sugar We’re Going Down” is quoted in “I Am My Own Muse,” “Chicago Is So Two Years Ago” is quoted in “Heaven, Iowa,” and “Disloyal Order of Water Buffalos” is quoted in “What a Time To Be Alive.”<sup>39</sup> The 1990’s are referenced through the monologue from *Reality Bites* in “The Pink Seashell.”<sup>40</sup> The most poignant (and my personal favorite) reference is to the 1980’s, with the use of the formerly popular song fade out in “So Much (For) Stardust.” The disco sound of “What a Time To Be Alive” is a reference to the 1970’s subculture, with the use of the four-on-the-floor groove, a horn

---

<sup>38</sup> Fall Out Boy, *So Much (For) Stardust* Lyric Booklet, as printed with CD, March 24, 2023.

<sup>39</sup> These quoted songs are quite significant to Fall Out Boy’s career trajectory: “Sugar We’re Going Down” was their first hit single; “Chicago Is So Two Years Ago” is from their debut album, *Take This To Your Grave*, which celebrated its 20 year anniversary just after the release of *So Much (For) Stardust*; “Disloyal Order of Water Buffaloes” is the first track on *Folie à Deux*, of which *So Much (For) Stardust* is the sequel to, and at the time of its release was intended to be their final album.

<sup>40</sup> *Reality Bites*, directed by Ben Stiller (Universal Studios, 1994).

line, synthesizer, and the clear emulation of the style.<sup>41</sup> The 1950's tune "Little Bitty Pretty One" by Bobby Day is quoted in "So Good Right Now," and the title "I Am My Own Muse" comes from a quote attributed to Frida Kahlo, who was obviously a major artistic force in the early 1900's.<sup>42</sup> With the many direct cultural references this album is something of a time capsule through the lens of the 21st century.

The lyrics reference many cultural events and icons. "Flu Game" and "What a Time To Be Alive" both not-so-subtly reference the COVID-19 pandemic, "Flu Game" in its title, and "What a Time To Be Alive" with the lyrics "Sometimes you wonder if we're ever looking back at a picture of two thousand nineteen, and saying 'That's the way, the world it used to be'," and "I got the quarantine blues."<sup>43</sup> They also reference artistic iconography through their lyrics, such as the Statue of David, Moonlight Sonata, the Ramones, Frida Kahlo, and Van Gogh.<sup>44</sup> One of the greatest influences on Fall Out Boy's lyrics is movies.<sup>45</sup> The most obvious of these is, of course, the *Reality Bites*

---

<sup>41</sup> Stephen Blush, *When Rock Met Disco* (Lanham, MD: Backbeat Publishing, 2023).

<sup>42</sup> Bobby Day, "Little Bitty Pretty One," 1957, Regency Records.

<sup>43</sup> Fall Out Boy, "What a Time To Be Alive," track 12 on *So Much (For) Stardust*, March 24, 2023, Fueled By Ramen.

<sup>44</sup> Fall Out Boy, *So Much (for) Stardust*, Released March 24, 2023, Fueled by Ramen, Spotify Streaming Audio.

<sup>45</sup> Pete Wentz, interviewed by Zach Sang on *The Zach Sang Show*, April 6, 2023.

monologue in “The Pink Seashell.” The use of an Ethan Hawke monologue is also an abstract reference to their chart-topping song “Uma Thurman” on *American Beauty/American Psycho*, as Hawke was once married to Thurman. Other movies referenced on *So Much (For) Stardust* include Jordan Peele’s *Nope* with the lyric “Is there a word for Bad Miracles?” in the first verse of “Heartbreak Feels So Good.”<sup>46</sup> In *Nope* the main character asks this question of his sister in the exposition of the movie, and it is a major theme throughout the rest of the film.<sup>47</sup> In what is likely a nod to Wentz’s previous marriage, the other film explicitly referenced is *A Star Is Born* in “Heaven, Iowa,” with the lyric “I feel so ‘A Star Is Born’.”<sup>48</sup> This iconic film, most recently starring Bradley Cooper in 2018, follows an alcoholic musician who falls in love with a younger singer; this narrative is not dissimilar to Wentz’s former marriage to Ashlee Simpson, of whom he dated, married, and divorced during the height of his drug and alcohol abuse.<sup>49</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> *Nope*, directed by Jordan Peele (Universal Pictures, 2022).

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Fall Out Boy, “Heaven, Iowa,” track 5 on *So Much (For) Stardust*, March 24, 2023, Fueled By Ramen.

<sup>49</sup> *A Star is Born*, directed by Bradley Cooper (Warner Bros. Pictures, 2018); and Sarah Hearon, “Ashlee Simpson and Pete Wentz’s Relationship Timeline: From Married to Coparenting Bronx,” *US Weekly*, February 19, 2024.



As is expected in popular music, interpersonal relationships are another major theme throughout the album. Fall Out Boy references romantic partners, family members, friends, and members of their fanbase frequently throughout their discography and this album is no exception. For example, “Heaven, Iowa” is about “scar-crossed lovers,” and both “Love From The Other Side” and “So Much (For) Stardust” reference someone who was “the sunshine of [their] lifetime;” presumably, these are both referencing the same person. “Hold Me Like a Grudge,” “So Good Right Now,” “Flu Game,” and “Baby Annihilation” also have overt references to former paramours. “The Pink Seashell” discusses a son’s relationship with his now-deceased father.

The title track, “So Much (For) Stardust,” is the culmination of the album narrative. This title, as Pete Wentz has divulged, comes from the idea that we are all made of stardust.<sup>50</sup> And, compounding on this theme, it is about the divisiveness of politics and beliefs and the mass hate in the world, despite the fact that humans all come from a power greater than ourselves.<sup>51</sup> As previously mentioned, the album ends inconclusively.<sup>52</sup> I interpret this as an allusion to the inconclusiveness of the album’s narrative, that even though we are all made of stardust, there will always be both conflict

---

<sup>50</sup> Pete Wentz, interviewed by Zach Sang on *The Zach Sang Show*, April 6, 2023.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Fall Out Boy, “So Much (For) Stardust,” track 13 on *So Much (For) Stardust*, March 24, 2023, Fueled By Ramen.

and hope. “So Much (For) Stardust” also includes references to lyrics from eight of the previous tracks, explicitly tying the themes of the individual songs together, as shown by Figure 8.

<p><u>So Much for Stardust</u></p> <p>I'm in a winter mood, dreaming of spring now  I'm burning myself down  Burning myself down, burning</p> <p>I feel like something bad has stretched out over and over again  Until I'm creased and I'm about to break down the middle  Split me right down the middle, right, right down the middle, yeah</p> <p>The stars are the same as ever  I don't have the guts to keep it together  Stuck in the permafrost  Life is just a game, maybe  I'm stuck in a lonely loop, my baby</p> <p>So much for stardust  We thought we had it all, thought we had it all  Thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all</p> <p>I need the sound of crowds or I can't fall asleep at night  I can't take my thoughts and I am awake  Another year of possibilities left unwrapped  Like it's the day right after Christmas past  And I'm pretty positive my pain isn't cool enough</p> <p>Like a sledgehammer to a disco ball  Crushing all my low, low, low, low, ache it 'til you make it  I think I've been going through it  And I've been putting your name to it</p> <p>In another life you were my babe  In another life you were the sunshine of my lifetime  What would trade the pain for? I'm not sure  I used to be a real go-getter  I used to think it'd all get better</p>	<p><u>Love From The Other Side</u></p> <p>And you were the sunshine of my lifetime  What would you trade the pain for?</p> <p>We were a hammer to the Statue of David  We were a painting you could never frame</p> <p>They say we gotta get ahead yeah,  No matter what it takes</p> <hr/> <p><u>Hold Me like a Grudge</u></p> <p>When you ask how I've been  I thought I knew better, I thought it would get better</p> <hr/> <p><u>Heaven, Iowa</u></p> <p>Shake things up and see what comes down, down,  down, down</p> <p>Star-crossed lovers, forever</p> <hr/> <p><u>So Good Right Now</u></p> <p>I ripped myself apart  I'll be whatever you need me to be  Cut myself down  To whatever you need me to be</p> <hr/> <p><u>I am my Own Muse</u></p> <p>Smash all the guitars  'Til we see all the stars</p> <p>I'm just tryin to keep it together  But it gets a little harder when it never gets better</p> <hr/> <p><u>Flu Game</u></p> <p>Confront all the pain like a gift under the tree</p> <hr/> <p><u>The Kinstugi Kid</u></p> <p>We're going low, low, low, low</p> <hr/> <p><u>What a Time to be Alive</u></p> <p>They say that I should try meditation  But I don't wanna be with my own thoughts</p>
--	---

Figure 8: The interconnectedness of lyrics in “So Much (For) Stardust”

*So Much (For) Stardust* stands as a testament to Pete Wentz’s lyrical prowess, weaving together themes of mental health struggles, the passage of time, and interpersonal relationships. It echoes the band’s earlier works in thematic elements in a more nuanced approach and has a rich tapestry of musicals references spanning various eras and genres, as well as nods to cultural events and icons. The title track, “So Much (For) Stardust,” encapsulates the album’s narrative arc through references to other tracks throughout the album and highlights the divisiveness and interconnectedness of humanity. Pete Wentz’s lyrical commentary contributes to Fall Out Boy’s politically progressive stance and is part of their greater activism.

Fall Out Boy’s music reflects their rebellion against social conventions, a long-standing tradition in alternative rock.<sup>53</sup> Fall Out Boy’s musical output is only a part of their greater societal impact; they are both influenced by culture and have influence on it. In the early 2000’s Fall Out Boy was a major voice for LGBTQ+ equal rights and advocacy. Pete Wentz, particularly, was perceived as sexually ambiguous.<sup>54</sup> Throughout his career he has donned clothes and makeup considered to be feminine, and the *So Much (For) Stardust* era is no exception – for example, in the lyric booklet he may be seen in a

---

<sup>53</sup> Sasha Geffen, *Glitter Up The Dark: How Pop Music Broke the Binary*, (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2020).

<sup>54</sup> Sara Feigin and Jenna Million, “Pete Wentz to Harry Styles: How Assumed Queerness has Changed,” *Name 3 Songs*, podcast, September 11, 2021.

Blackhawks jersey with a skirt and long bleached-blond hair (figure 9).<sup>55</sup> The juxtaposition of traditionally masculine imagery, the hockey jersey and bat, with traditional femininity, encapsulated in a skirt and long bleach-blond hair, thwarts gender symbolism entirely.



Figure 9: Pete Wentz in the *So Much (For) Stardust* Lyric Booklet

Wentz not only pushes the envelope on masculinity, but in the early 2000's rock scene – which was not always safe for queer people – he spoke out for the LGBTQ+ community and created space where there was none.<sup>56</sup> This is important because,

<sup>55</sup> Fall Out Boy, *So Much (For) Stardust* Lyric Booklet, as printed with CD, March 24, 2023.

<sup>56</sup> Sara Feigin and Jenna Million, “Pete Wentz to Harry Styles: How Assumed Queerness has Changed,” *Name 3 Songs*, podcast, September 11, 2021.

historically, rock began as a counter-culture movement, but ‘mainstream’ rock has been a white cisgender heterosexual male-dominated space, with the occasional ‘outsider’ like Freddie Mercury making progressive waves.<sup>57</sup> The early 2000’s, unlike the present-day, were not having the same conversations about queerness and gender exploration; homophobia was rampant and the AIDs crisis made it so being gay was something to be feared.<sup>58</sup> There are considerable precursors to Fall Out Boy’s contributions to the LGBTQ+ community. While the news and government at best ignored queer people and at worst convinced the public that queerness was a disease, the punk scene, which was supposed to be an inclusive space, began to push queer people outside of their bubble.<sup>59</sup> From this rose the Queercore movement – a sub-culture of the punk sub-culture, which created a community out of those disavowed from their previous punk communities.<sup>60</sup> This music was considered highly deviant, writing unfiltered about sex, race, anger, politics, and the many facets of everyday queerness, and gained an audience in Urban

---

<sup>57</sup> Sasha Geffen, *Glitter Up The Dark* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2020).

<sup>58</sup> Sara Feigin and Jenna Million, “Pete Wentz to Harry Styles: How Assumed Queerness has Changed,” *Name 3 Songs*, podcast, September 11, 2021.

<sup>59</sup> Walter Crasshole, Yony Leyser, and Liam Warfield, *Queercore: How to Punk a Revolution: An Oral History* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2021).

<sup>60</sup> Jayna Brown and Tavia Nyong’o, “Queer As Punk: A Guide To LGBTQIA+ Punk,” *NPR*, June 15, 2020.

queer circles.<sup>61</sup> But, this was before the interconnectedness of the internet – sub-cultures were not widely accessible nor known as they are now because they were tied to rigid geographical locations such as New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Chicago.<sup>62</sup> Fall Out Boy were some of the first pro-queer rock groups rise to mainstream stardom and helped to shed light in the mainstream on the issues already well-known and discussed in Queercore. Thus, Pete Wentz’s open defiance of gender norms and kissing men on stage was shocking to see in mainstream music and began to create a space for LGBTQ+ people in the mainstage pop punk scene.<sup>63</sup>

Pete Wentz’s impact on the queer community remains undeniable.<sup>64</sup> There are numerous personal essays about how his brazen advocacy in the early 2000’s gave young queer people a feeling of safety and validity as they explored their sexuality and gender identity.<sup>65</sup> Pete has openly said that his goal through Fall Out Boy was to create an

---

<sup>61</sup> Jayna Brown and Tavia Nyong’o, “Queer As Punk: A Guide To LGBTQIA+ Punk,” *NPR*, June 15, 2020.

<sup>62</sup> Walter Crasshole, Yony Leyser, and Liam Warfield, *Queercore: How to Punk a Revolution: An Oral History* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2021).

<sup>63</sup> Sara Feigin and Jenna Million, “Pete Wentz to Harry Styles: How Assumed Queerness has Changed,” *Name 3 Songs*, podcast, September 11, 2021.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> Ellen Ricks, “Fall Out Boy Made Pop Punk More LGBTQ+ Friendly,” *Into*, March 28, 2018.

empowering and accepting space for people of all backgrounds; the group refused to play venues which discriminated against queer and non-white people, have kicked people out of shows for discrimination, and have made statements opposing Proposition 8 and Article 1, Section 36.03.<sup>66</sup> Some have critiqued this allyship as ‘queerbaiting’ or a PR move, but these criticisms fail to take into account the time and context of the alt-rock scene and the impact that Fall Out Boy had in that space.<sup>67</sup> While today there are dozens of out-and-proud celebrities in the community to look up to, for queer kids in the early 2000’s, myself included, Pete’s fierce allyship was pivotal to feeling accepted in the alternative rock scene.<sup>68</sup>

This allyship shines through their music as well. Direct references from former albums include the songs “G.I.N.A.S.F.S.,” which stands for “Gay Is Not A Synonym For Shitty,” “Golden,” which references how parents project their hopes that their child is

---

<sup>66</sup> Ellen Ricks, “Fall Out Boy Made Pop Punk More LGBTQ+ Friendly,” *Into*, March 28, 2018; Proposition 8 refers to the California ballot proposition in 2008 to ban same-sex marriage, which was passed but later overturned in court. See [<https://web.archive.org/web/20130418150058/http://voterguide.sos.ca.gov/past/2008/general/text-proposed-laws/text-of-proposed-laws.pdf#prop8>]; Article 1 Section 36.03 refers to the Sanctity of Marriage Amendment in the Alabama Constitution, which banned issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. See [<https://codes.findlaw.com/al/alabama-constitution-of-1901/al-const-art-i-sect-36-03/>].

<sup>67</sup> Judith Fathallah, “Is Stage-Gay Queerbaiting? The Politics of Performative Homoeroticism in Emo Bands,” *Journal of Popular Music Studies* 33, 2021.

<sup>68</sup> Ellen Ricks, “Fall Out Boy Made Pop Punk More LGBTQ+ Friendly,” *Into*, March 28, 2018.



not gay and how that is damaging to gay children, and “Centuries,” which is about trans rights activist Marsha P. Johnson.<sup>69</sup> The most prominent and persistent example of inclusivity, of which the tradition continues in *So Much (For) Stardust*, is that gendered pronouns are not used in Fall Out Boy songs. This is an intentional choice in their songwriting as part of their mission to create an accepting space; they construct their songs so that anyone can connect to them and project their romantic and personal lives onto the lyrics.<sup>70</sup>

In emo and punk spaces subverting the dominant culture is an expectation, but Fall Out Boy bridged the gap between the subculture and mainstream by bringing these conversations to publications such as *MTV*, *J-14*, and *NPR*, which catered to the mainstream and popular.<sup>71</sup> They are not unique just due to their advocacy, but because they did not shy from sharing that advocacy and promoting equality as they transitioned from playing dive bars in Chicago to stadium tours across North America.<sup>72</sup>

---

<sup>69</sup> Fall Out Boy, *Infinity on High*, Released February 6, 2007, recorded December 2005-October 2006, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio; and *American Beauty/American Psycho*, Released January 16, 2015, recorded 2014, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.

<sup>70</sup> Ellen Ricks, “Fall Out Boy Made Pop Punk More LGBTQ+ Friendly,” *Into*, March 28, 2018.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Sara Feigin and Jenna Million, “Pete Wentz to Harry Styles: How Assumed Queerness has Changed,” *Name 3 Songs*, podcast, September 11, 2021.

*So Much (For) Stardust* encapsulates and is the culmination of 20 years of musicianship. The album embodies a fusion of diverse influences, both musically and artistically, from Beethoven to Jordan Peele. Their departure from conventional rock structures is evident through their use of through-composed movements, classical instruments, and spoken word segments. Pete Wentz's lyrical prowess, which draws from personal experiences, pop culture, and world events, builds the narrative themes of *So Much (For) Stardust*, most prominent of which are the passage of time and human relationships. Embracing a fluidity of genre and sound, they refuse to be confined to a single style and instead carve a unique identity for each album, built from hardcore punk roots and evolving into alternative rock experimentation. Fall Out Boy's commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusivity and advocacy distinguishes them as trailblazers in the rock scene and creating space for people of all identities. Their music transcends entertainment, serving as a platform for self-expression, social critique, and cultural dialogue, which has made a lasting impact on fans and critics alike.

## CHAPTER 3 – AQUA

The following pages contain a complete score of *AQUA* which was written between December 2023 and March of 2024.



**A  
Q ueer  
U nrelenting  
A nger**

**Blake  
Buehler**

**Presented to the Faculty  
of the Graduate School of  
Stephen F. Austin State University  
In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements  
For the Degree of  
Master of Music**

**2024**

# **A Queer Unrelenting Anger**

**Blake Buehler**

**2024**

**Voice**

**Bb Clarinet**

**Bb Trumpet**

**Cello**

**Electric Piano**

**Electric Guitar**

**Electric Bass**

**Drum Set**

**Auxiliary Percussion**

**Vibraphone**

**22 Minutes**

**Presented to the Faculty of the  
Graduate School of  
Stephen F. Austin State University  
In Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements  
For the Degree of  
Master of Music**

## Performance Notes:

1. The voice part is recommended for tenor but may be sung by any individual in any comfortable octave.
2. The auxiliary percussion requires: crash cymbal, high tom, low tom, mounted tambourine, shaker, and bass drum. The notation key is as follows:



3. The voice, guitar, bass, and keyboard require amplification. Optionally, and depending upon the performance space, the clarinet and cello may be amplified.
4. The electric keyboard part includes pre-set sounds via Mainstage. This setup requires midi keyboard, a laptop, amplification, associated cables, and optionally an audio interface. To download the concert file, please visit [www.blakebuehlermusic.com/AQUA](http://www.blakebuehlermusic.com/AQUA).
5. This work is best realized with all instruments amplified and live mixing.

## About The Composer:

Blake Dylan Buehler (b. 2000) is an internationally performed composer, educator, and artist-activist with a passion for innovative music and the betterment of society through music. He has collaborated with acclaimed groups including Transient Canvas, the Furman Symphonic Band, and Unheard-of//Ensemble. His catalogue includes a broad range of music, encompassing works for band, jazz ensembles, Pierrot ensemble, woodwind quintet, percussion ensembles, various mixed ensembles, and a lengthy list of solo repertoires. Buehler's music is a place of radical acceptance, and is he dedicated to activism and leadership through music.

1. **Stardust Eulogy**
2. **Cry Me a River**
3. **Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials**

A last call vodka she's checking her watch  
Behind closed doors  
Knock, Knock.

A needleless syringe and a plastic vial  
I've never thought of violets like this  
April days,  
Lovers as of late,  
I told you so I told you so I told you so

Beautiful boy, beautiful boy.  
Beautiful, beautiful, beautiful  
Crest of a wave,  
Lovers as of late,  
I told you so.

Blackening lungs in a strangers basement  
It reminds me of the way you tasted  
That's not a reflection of you  
But a commentary on the smiles I'm faking

A needless syringe and a plastic vial  
I've never thought of heartache like this  
Twilight haze,  
Strangers as of late,  
I told you so I told you so I told you so.

I told you, I told you.  
I told you in a twilight haze.  
Late lovers, late lovers.

#### 4. **From the Office of Paul R. McHugh**

Forever bound in hazy chemicals  
Heartbreak in jagged lines  
Unrequited anger in place of blinding lights

And I don't know how to fix it  
I don't know how to live  
A monster in my skin  
And I can't help but wonder  
If I were to die

Turn off the TV static  
There's nothing like this in the world  
Where every blessing is a curse  
In the heights of joyous lies  
There are lovers and thorns and thorny lovers  
Just give me a sign.

I've been told it's medical  
The way the rage persists  
Outrunning grief like Orpheus  
To where I find the sky

And I don't know how to change it  
I don't know what to say  
A white room in dark days  
And I can't help but notice  
If I were to die

Would I miss myself?

#### 5. **Babylon**

The future is better than the old days. No matter how I try to change the pain, it doesn't trade. I tell my therapist I'm not haunted anymore. But I'm not counting on failed dreams. I can still feel my glass hands. Sharpened pencils. Promises broken in Babylon. Reduced to a half ounce vial. I can be whoever you want me to be. Broken lens cap, angel eyes. Can we change the subject? The cacophony didn't stop. So save me a spot in the twenty-seven club, I'll find you in another life.

#### 6. **If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)**

It's not that I'm not over it  
It's just that I can't quit  
Scratching dirt off fingernails  
Finding Orion in blood skies

I only see your face in crowds full of strangers  
Dark shadows of pearl rings  
I think I used to love you but I wouldn't trade the pain for it

Can you keep a secret?  
Half-doomed and semi-sweet  
The Devil's in the details of the crimes that we commit  
There's tragic art in your magnetism  
I won't ask you for anything  
Except to stay alive

Kiss you behind backseats  
So she doesn't see  
Young volcanoes on the bedroom floor  
Closed doors and drawers delight

I see you now for who you are  
Behind closed doors  
Behind the trigger  
In crowds full of strangers  
I've got all this love to keep to myself in crowds full of strangers  
So pull it  
How could you?

#### 7. **There Will Always Be A Light On**

I left a light on  
Resisting your untrue blues  
Cigarette daydreams too  
You're the grudge I refuse to lose.

You are the rivers and I am the gray sky  
Polar magnets pulling starry eyes  
Talking to the mirror unread reply  
I don't know what to say

Fighting my way out of Babylon  
Beautiful days are now foregone  
Would I miss the way  
You hate me?

You left a door open that I can't seem to close  
Venom is in my hopes  
You're the last real refuge  
With my dying breath I would tell you

The kids are dying in the bathroom  
Backroom lovers got no Stardust to get them through  
They say fight for what you love  
Then give me a life worth fighting for  
I go back to twilight April  
I still don't know what to say.

Score

# Stardust Eulogy

Blake Buehler

001 **Ethereal** ♩ = 86

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Trumpet in B $\flat$

Cello

Electric Piano

Electric Guitar

Electric Bass

Drum Set

Percussion

Vibraphone

*mf*

*mf*

*p*

soft mallets

*p*  $\leftarrow$  *f* *p*

©Blake Buehler 2024



Stardust Eulogy

5

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

*pp*  $\leftarrow$  *mf*

*mp*  $\leftarrow$  *p*

(1<sup>st</sup>)

Stardust Eulogy

9

B $\flat$  Cl. *mf*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *pp*

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc. *p*

Vib.

Stardust Eulogy

13

B $\flat$  Cl. *mp*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *p* *mp*

Vc. *8<sup>va</sup>*

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc. *pppp*

Vib.

Stardust Eulogy

17

B $\flat$  Cl. *ff*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *mp*

Vc. *mf*

E. Pno. (*8va*)

E. Gtr. *f*

E. B. *f*

D. S. *f*

Perc. *mf* *f* choke harder mallet

Vib.

Stardust Eulogy

20

B $\flat$  Cl. *fp*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *f*

Vc.

E. Pno. *(8va)*

E. Gtr. *f*

E. B. *f*

D. S. *f*

Perc. *f*

Vib.

The musical score for 'Stardust Eulogy' on page 67 consists of nine staves. The B $\flat$  Clarinet part begins with a fermata and a dynamic marking of *fp*. The B $\flat$  Trumpet part starts with a dynamic marking of *f*. The Violoncello part has a long note with a fermata. The Electric Piano part features an 8va octave marking and a complex rhythmic pattern. The Electric Guitar and Electric Bass parts have dynamic markings of *f*. The Drums part has a dynamic marking of *f*. The Percussion part has a dynamic marking of *f*. The Vibraphone part is silent.

Stardust Eulogy

22

B $\flat$  Cl. *fff*

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc. *mf*

E. Pno. *8va*

E.Gtr. *ff*

E.B. *ff*

D. S. *f*

Perc.

Vib. *mf*

Stardust Eulogy

24

B $\flat$  Cl. *f*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *f*

Vc. *f*

(8<sup>va</sup>)

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S. \*

Perc.

Vib.

Stardust Eulogy

002  
27

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

*mp*

*mf*

*pp*



Stardust Eulogy

30

B $\flat$  Cl. *f*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *mp*

Vc.

E. Pno. *mp*

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc. *fp*

Vib.

Stardust Eulogy

33

B $\flat$  Cl. *f* *fp*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *f* *mf*

Vc.

E. Pno. *crescendo*

E. Gtr. *crescendo*

E. B. *crescendo*

D. S. *crescendo*

Perc.

Vib. *crescendo*

Stardust Eulogy

36

B $\flat$  Cl.

*mf* *ff*

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

*crescendo*

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score for 'Stardust Eulogy' is arranged for a large ensemble. It begins at measure 36. The B $\flat$  Clarinet part features a melodic line with a dynamic range from mezzo-forte (*mf*) to fortissimo (*ff*). The B $\flat$  Trumpet part has a few notes before resting. The Violoncello part has a rhythmic pattern that increases in volume, marked as *crescendo*. The Electric Piano part consists of sustained chords. The Electric Guitar part plays a series of chords with a rhythmic pattern. The Electric Bass part has a steady eighth-note line. The Drums part features a complex, syncopated pattern with many rests. The Percussion part has a steady eighth-note pattern. The Vibraphone part has a melodic line with a rhythmic pattern.

Stardust Eulogy

39

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

*f*

*ff*

*f*

*crescendo*

Stardust Eulogy

42

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

*fff*

## Welcome to The Show

*This section includes a recommended rant. However, I strongly encourage the artist to use this as an outline rather than the verbatim word for word rant. **The artist should express their queer rage however it resonates within them.** Free yourself. The only stipulations are that this section must be between 30 seconds and 2 minutes in length, and begin with the line 'cry me a fucking river' and end with the line 'welcome to the show.'*

*(Loud, angry, and aggressive – this has built up inside you for a long time and this is your opportunity for release)*

Cry me a fucking river you fucking asshole.

*(brief pause, let that sink in)  
(continue, still aggressive, but not quite as loud)*

To have so much fucking privilege – no. Do you even know what it's like?

*(stopping and starting, losing grip on reality, crescendo throughout)*

Do you understand –  
The fucking audacity-  
No please, PLEASE!  
Tell me –  
Tell me why I'm wrong.  
Please go on.  
Oh that's, that's right!

*(with faux clarity, LOUD)*

You are a privileged fuck up with absolutely no regard for any human life around you!

*(Regaining Composure)*

Right on. Okay. Well.  
Your life must be real fucking hard. Fuck.  
Cry me a fucking river.  
And welcome to the show.

Score

# Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

Blake Buehler

003

Fast and Loud ♩ = 142

The musical score is arranged in two systems. The first system includes Tenor, Electric Guitar, Electric Piano, Bass Guitar, and Drum Set. The second system includes T, E.Gtr., E. Pno., Bass, and D. S. The score is in 3/4 time with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The tempo is marked 'Fast and Loud' with a quarter note equal to 142 beats per minute. The Electric Guitar part in the first system is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Drum Set part in the first system is also marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The Electric Piano part in the second system is marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The D. S. part in the second system includes the instruction 'classic rock groove, sim. "Hold Me Like a Grudge"'. The Tenor part in the first system is mostly silent, with some notes in the final measure. The T part in the second system is also mostly silent. The E.Gtr. part in the second system features a melodic line with some double stops. The E. Pno. part in the second system features a simple harmonic accompaniment. The Bass part in the second system features a steady eighth-note groove. The Drum Set part in the second system features a classic rock groove with a snare and bass drum pattern.

©Blake Buehler 2024

Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

13 *mf*

T  
8 A last call vod - ka she's check-ing her watch Be-hind

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S. *mp*

20

T  
8 closed doors Knock, Knock A need-le-less syr-inge and a plas-tic vi-al

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass *mf*

D. S. *mf mp*



Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

25

T

I've nev-er thought of vio-lets like this Ap-ril days, Lov-ers as of late I told you so I told you

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

29

T

so I told you so - o - o Beau-ti-ful boy, Beau-ti-ful

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

34

T

boy, Beau - ti - ful Beau - ti - ful Beau - ti - ful crest of a wave, Lov - ers

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

38

T

as of late I told you Beau - ti - ful boy, Beau - ti - ful

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

42

T  
8  
boy, Beau - ti - ful, Beau - ti - ful, Beau - ti - ful crest of a wave lov - ers

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

46

T  
8  
as of late I told you so - o - o - o

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

*ff*

*mp*

Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

50

T

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

56

T

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

*mf*

Black-en - ing lungs in a stran - gers base-ment it re - minds me of the way you

*muted*

*p*

*mp*

*mp*

Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

60

T  
8  
tas - ted That's not a re - flec - tion of you — but a com - en - ta - ry on the smiles I'm fa -

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.



64

T  
8  
king A need - less syr - inge and a plas - tic vi - al I've nev - er thought of

E.Gtr.  
open  
*mf*

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.  
*mf*

Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

68

T  
heart-ache like this Twi-light haze, stran-gers as of late I told you so I told you so I told you so - o -

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

72

T  
o Beau-ti-ful boy, Beau-ti-ful boy, Beau-ti-ful Beau - ti -

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

78

T

ful Beau-ti-ful crest of a wave, Lov-ers as of late I told you Beau-ti-ful boy, Beau-ti-ful

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

84

T

boy, Beau-ti-ful, Beau-ti-ful, Beau-ti-ful crest of a wave lov-ers as of late I told you

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

90

T

so - o - o - o

E.Gtr.

*ff*

Em Am B5

E. Pno.

*mp*

Bass

D. S.

97

T

E.Gtr.

Em Am B7 D7 G5

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.



Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

105

T

I told you I told you wo-ah I

E.Gtr. Am B5 connect solo into chords *mp*

E. Pno. *mf*

Bass

D. S.



111

T

told you in a twi - light haze Yeah late lo - vers

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.



Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials *f*

118

T  
8  
Late lo - vers Beau-ti-ful boy, Beau-ti-ful boy,

E.Gtr.  
*f*

E. Pno.  
*p*

Bass  
*f*

D. S.  
*f*

125

T  
8  
Beau-ti-ful Beau - ti - ful Beau-ti-ful crest of a wave, Lov-ers as of late I told you Beau - ti-ful

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials

131

T  
8  
boy, Beau-ti-ful boy, Beau-ti-ful, Beau-ti-ful, Beau-ti-ful crest of a wave lov-ers as of late I—

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

137

T  
8  
— told you so - o - o - o

E.Gtr.

E. Pno.

Bass

D. S.

Score

# From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

Blake Buehler

004

Anthem ♩ = 100

Musical score for 'From the Office of Paul R. McHugh' by Blake Buehler. The score is in 4/4 time with a tempo of 100 beats per minute. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#). The score includes parts for Tenor, Clarinet in Bb, Trumpet in Bb, Cello, Electric Piano, Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Drum Set, Percussion, and Vibraphone. The Tenor part has lyrics: "For - ev - er \_\_\_ bound in ha - zy chem-i-cals". The Percussion part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents (>). The Vibraphone part has a melodic line starting in the third measure with a mezzo-forte (*mp*) dynamic.

©2024 Blake Buehler

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

5

The musical score is arranged in a vertical stack of staves. At the top is the vocal line for Tenor (T), which includes the lyrics: "Heart - break in jag - ged lines Un - re-quit - ed". Below the vocal line are staves for B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The Percussion part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents (>) throughout the piece. The Vibraphone part consists of sustained chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

9

T  
an - ger in place of blind - ing lights And I don't know how to

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

13

T

fix it I don't know how to live— A mon - ster— in my

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is arranged in a vertical stack of staves. The vocal line (T) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 8/8. The lyrics are: "fix it I don't know how to live— A mon - ster— in my". The instrumental parts include B $\flat$  Clarinet, B $\flat$  Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano (Grand Staff), Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Drums, Percussion (with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and accents), and Vibraphone (with a melodic line).

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

17

T. 8  
skin, And I can't help \_\_\_ but won-der \_\_\_ If <sup>4</sup> were <sup>3</sup> to

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The vocal line (T.) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "skin, And I can't help \_\_\_ but won-der \_\_\_ If <sup>4</sup> were <sup>3</sup> to". The instrumental parts include B $\flat$  Clarinet, B $\flat$  Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The Percussion part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents. The Vibraphone part has a melodic line with a triplet of eighth notes.



From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

21

The musical score is for a piece titled "From the Office of Paul R. McHugh". It features a vocal line and several instrumental parts. The vocal line starts with the word "die" and then "Turn off the T V sta-tic— There's". The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet, B♭ Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano, Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Double Bass, Percussion, and Vibraphone. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mf*, *pp*, *mp*, *p*, *fp*, and *f*. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line is in treble clef, while the other instruments are in their respective clefs (B♭ Cl., B♭ Tpt., Vc., E. Pno., E. Gtr., E.B., D. S., Perc., Vib.).

T  
die Turn off the T V sta-tic— There's

B♭ Cl.  
*pp*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.  
*mp*

E. Pno.  
*p*

E. Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.  
*p* *mf* *mp*

Perc.  
*fp* *f* *p*

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

25

T

no - thing like \_ this in the world      Where ev - 'ry bless - ing is a curse \_\_\_\_\_ in the heights of

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

29

T  
joy - ous lies \_\_\_\_\_ There are lov - ers and thorns\_ and Thorn - y lov - ers Just

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

33

The musical score is arranged in ten staves. The vocal line (T) begins with the lyrics "give me a sign" and features a melodic line with a fermata. The B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) and B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.) parts enter with a sustained, melodic line marked *ff*. The Violoncello (Vc.) part has a melodic line marked *mf*. The Electric Piano (E. Pno.) part consists of chords and arpeggios marked *mf*. The Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.) part has a rhythmic accompaniment marked *f*. The Electric Bass (E. B.) part has a rhythmic accompaniment marked *mf*. The Drums (D. S.) part features a rhythmic pattern marked *f*. The Percussion (Perc.) part has a rhythmic pattern marked *pp*. The Vibraphone (Vib.) part has a rhythmic accompaniment.

T  
give me a sign

B♭ Cl. *ff*

B♭ Tpt. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

E. Pno. *mf*

E. Gtr. *f*

E. B. *mf*

D. S. *f*

Perc. *pp*

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

37

T

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for a band. The score is for measures 37 through 40. The instruments listed are Trumpet (T), B-flat Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B-flat Trombone (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Drums (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The Trumpet part is mostly rests. The Clarinet and Trombone parts have melodic lines with slurs. The Violoncello part has a rhythmic pattern. The Electric Piano part has chords and some melodic movement. The Electric Guitar part has chords and some melodic movement. The Electric Bass part has a rhythmic pattern. The Drums part has a steady beat. The Percussion part has a complex rhythmic pattern with accents. The Vibraphone part has a rhythmic pattern.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

41

The musical score consists of ten staves. The vocal line (T) begins at measure 41 with a melodic phrase in treble clef, marked *mp*. The lyrics are: "I've been told \_\_\_ it's med-i-cal \_\_\_ The". The instrumental accompaniment includes:

- B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.): Treble clef, playing a melodic line with *sfzp* dynamics.
- B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.): Treble clef, playing a melodic line with *sfzp* dynamics.
- Violoncello (Vc.): Bass clef, playing a melodic line with *sfzp* dynamics.
- Electric Piano (E. Pno.): Grand staff, playing chords with *p* dynamics.
- Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.): Treble clef, playing a melodic line.
- Electric Bass (E. B.): Bass clef, playing a melodic line.
- Drum Set (D. S.): Snare drum, playing a rhythmic pattern with *p* dynamics.
- Percussion (Perc.): Playing a rhythmic pattern with accents.
- Vibraphone (Vib.): Treble clef, playing chords with *mp* dynamics.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

45

The musical score consists of ten staves. The top staff is for the Tenor (T) voice, with lyrics: "way the rage — per - sists Out run - ing — pain like Or - phe - us to". The second staff is for B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), the third for B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), and the fourth for Violoncello (Vc.). The fifth staff is for the Electric Piano (E. Pno.), showing a sustained chord progression. The sixth staff is for the Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), and the seventh for the Electric Bass (E. B.). The eighth staff is for the Drums (D. S.), showing a steady drum pattern. The ninth staff is for Percussion (Perc.), with a series of rhythmic accents. The tenth staff is for the Vibraphone (Vib.), with sustained chords.

T  
way the rage — per - sists Out run - ing — pain like Or - phe - us to

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

49

T  
8  
where I find the sky And I don't know how to change it I

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

A musical score for a band. The score is for measures 49-52. The instruments are: Tenor (T), B-flat Clarinet (B $\flat$  Cl.), B-flat Trumpet (B $\flat$  Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Drums (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The Tenor part has lyrics: "where I find the sky And I don't know how to change it I". The Electric Piano and Vibraphone parts have complex chordal textures with many accidentals. The Percussion part has a steady eighth-note pattern with accents. The other instruments (B $\flat$  Cl., B $\flat$  Tpt., Vc., E. Gtr., E. B.) have rests.



From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

53

T  
8  
don't know what to say — A white room — in dark days And I

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format. The vocal line (T) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are: "don't know what to say — A white room — in dark days And I". The instrumental parts include B $\flat$  Clarinet, B $\flat$  Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano (with a grand staff), Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Drums (with a snare drum line marked 'D. S.' and a percussion line with accents), and Vibraphone. The piano part features complex chordal textures with many beamed notes and ties.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

57

T  
8  
can't help but no-tice If were to die

B $\flat$  Cl. *pp*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *pp*

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S. *p* *mf*

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

61 *mf*

T Turn off the T V sta - tic — There's no - thing like — this in the

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc. *mp*

E. Pno. *p*

E.Gtr.

E.B. *mp*

D. S. *mp*

Perc. *fp* *f* *p*

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

65

T  
world Where ev - 'ry bless - ing is a curse in the heights of joy - ous lies

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

69

T

There are lov - ers and thorns\_ and Thorn - y lov-ers Just give me a sign

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

73

The musical score is arranged in ten staves. The top staff is for Tenor (T), which is mostly silent. The second staff is for B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), starting with a *mp* dynamic and a *ff* dynamic. The third staff is for B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), with dynamics *sfzp* and *f*. The fourth staff is for Violoncello (Vc.), with a *mf* dynamic. The fifth staff is for Electric Piano (E. Pno.), with a *mf* dynamic. The sixth staff is for Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), with *p* and *f* dynamics. The seventh staff is for Electric Bass (E.B.), with *f* and *mf* dynamics. The eighth staff is for Double Bass (D. S.), with a *f* dynamic. The ninth staff is for Percussion (Perc.), with a *pp* dynamic. The tenth staff is for Vibraphone (Vib.), with a *pp* dynamic. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

T

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

*mp* *ff*

*sfzp* *f* *sfzp*

*mf*

*mf*

*p* *f*

*f* *mf*

*f*

*pp*

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

77

*f*

T  
8

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.  
*f* *sfzp* *f*

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

I don't know how to

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for a piece titled 'From the Office of Paul R. McHugh'. The score is for a full band and includes a vocal line. The page number is 77. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line (T) starts with a rest and then sings 'I don't know how to'. The instrumental parts include B $\flat$  Clarinet (B $\flat$  Cl.), B $\flat$  Trumpet (B $\flat$  Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.), Electric Bass (E.B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The B $\flat$  Tpt. part has dynamic markings of *f*, *sfzp*, and *f*. The E.Gtr. part features a complex, rhythmic pattern of chords. The Perc. part has a steady, rhythmic accompaniment. The Vib. part has a melodic line that follows the vocal line.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

8/8

T  
fix it I don't know how to live \_\_\_\_\_ A mon - ster \_\_\_\_\_ in my

B♭ Cl.  
*f*

B♭ Tpt.  
*mp*

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The vocal line (T) is in 8/8 time and features lyrics: "fix it I don't know how to live \_\_\_\_\_ A mon - ster \_\_\_\_\_ in my". The vocal melody is written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The instrumental parts include: B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) with a forte (*f*) dynamic; B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.) with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic; Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.) with a complex, rhythmic pattern of chords and single notes; Electric Bass (E. B.) with a steady eighth-note bass line; Double Bass (D. S.) with a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes; and Percussion (Perc.) with a consistent, high-tempo rhythmic accompaniment. The Piano (E. Pno.) and Vibraphone (Vib.) parts are currently silent, indicated by whole rests. The score is divided into four measures.



From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

85

T  
8  
skin, And I can't help but wonder If I were to

B♭ Cl.  
*mf*

B♭ Tpt.  
*f* *mp*

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

89

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The vocal line (T) is at the top, with lyrics: "die would I miss my self?". The woodwinds (B♭ Cl. and B♭ Tpt.) have a melodic line starting in the fourth measure, marked *mf*. The strings (Vc., E. Pno., E. Gtr., E. B.) provide harmonic support. The percussion (D. S., Perc.) includes a snare drum pattern with accents and a vibraphone line.

T  
die would I miss my self?

B♭ Cl. *mf*

B♭ Tpt. *mf*

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

93

*f*

T  
Turn off the T V sta - tic — There's no - thing like — this in the

B $\flat$  Cl. *mp*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

E. Pno. *p*

E.Gtr.

E.B. *mf*

D. S. *mf*

Perc. *fp* *f* *p*

Vib. *p*

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

97

T  
world Where ev - 'ry bless - ing is a curse in the heights of joy - ous lies

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

101

T

There are lov - ers and thorns — and Thorn - y lov - ers Just give me a sign

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

105 *mf*

T  
Turn off the T V sta - tic — give me a sign —

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S. *p*

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The vocal line (T) is the primary focus, with lyrics written below the notes. The instrumental parts include B $\flat$  Clarinet, B $\flat$  Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano, Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Drums (D. S.), Percussion, and Vibraphone. The electric piano part features a complex, sustained chordal texture. The drums play a steady eighth-note pattern. The overall mood is contemplative and somber, as indicated by the *mf* and *p* dynamics.

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

109

T

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

*molto rit.*

# Babylon

Blake Buehler

Steady; Reactive to Speaker ♩ = 120

**005** (Out of Time) Speak calmly and clearly,  
with subdued emotion

3" The future is better than the old days. No matter how I try to change the pain, it doesn't trade.

*mp*

Voice (Tenor) 1

Voice (Trumpet) 2

Voice (Cello) 3

Voice (Guitar) 4

Voice (Drumset) 5

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Electric Piano All timings are approximate. The top  
priority is to align with the speaker. *mp* 8"

Electric Bass

Percussion

Vibraphone



Babylon

2

V 1 I tell my therapist I'm not haunted anymore. But I'm not counting on failed dreams.

E. Pno.

4

**In Time**

B♭ Cl. *mf* *f*

E. Pno.

8

**(Out of Time)**

V 1 I can still feel my glass hands. Sharpened pencils. Promises broken in Babylon. Reduced to

V 2 You're a freak.

B♭ Cl. *p*

E. Pno.

10

V 1 a half ounce vial. I can be whoever you want me to be. Broken lens cap, angel eyes.

E. Pno.

Babylon

12

V 1 Can we change the subject? The cacaphony didn't stop

V 4 You don't matter.

10"

E. Pno.

006

In Time

15

V 1

V 2 Randomly oscillate through the listed phrases at random intervals. At first, pause between statements; allow for others to speak and be heard. As time continues, increase frequency and volume to entropy:

V 3 Randomly oscillate through the listed phrases at random intervals. At first, pause between statements; allow for others to speak and be heard. As time continues, increase frequency and volume to entropy:

V 4 Randomly oscillate through the listed phrases at random intervals. At first, pause between statements; allow for others to speak and be heard. As time continues, increase frequency and volume to entropy:

V 5 Randomly oscillate through the listed phrases at random intervals. At first, pause between statements; allow for others to speak and be heard. As time continues, increase frequency and volume to entropy:

No one cares about you

You're not strong enough You're a freak Creep I won't leave

Get out *p*

I just don't love you anymore You'll never be my son

You look like a girl You're derranged Don't worry *p*

No one will ever want you You're not man enough You don't matter

Asshole I have evidence *p*

You're unnatural No one cares about you You're too loud

You should lose weight Slumbag *p*

E. Pno. *mp*

E.B. *mp*

Perc. scrape drumhead with rubber mallet for entire 4-beat duration, let ring *mp*

Vib. *mp*

Babylon

17

So save me a spot in the twenty-seven club I'll find you in another life

V 1

V 2

V 3

V 4

V 5

B♭ Cl.

*mf*

E. Pno.

E. B.

Perc.

Vib.

scrape drumhead with rubber mallet for entire 4-beat duration. let ring

V 1

V 2

V 3

V 4

V 5

B♭ Cl.

E. Pno.

E. B.

Perc.

sticks

Vib.

Babylon

24

V 1

V 2

V 3

V 4

V 5

B♭ Cl.

E. Pno.

E. B.

Perc.

Vib.

27

V 1

V 2

V 3

V 4

V 5

B♭ Cl.

E. Pno.

E. B.

Perc.

Vib.

Babylon

30

V 1

V 2

V 3

V 4

V 5

B♭ Cl.

E. Pno.

E. B.

Perc.

Vib.

V 1

V 2

V 3

V 4

V 5

B♭ Cl.

E. Pno.

E. B.

Perc.

Vib.

At this point all voices should be constant

*mf*

At this point all voices should be constant

*mf*

At this point all voices should be constant

*mf*

At this point all voices should be constant

*mf*

*fp*

# Babylon

This musical score is for a piece titled "Babylon" and is divided into two systems, starting at measure 38 and then measure 42.

The instruments and parts include:

- Violins:** Five staves (V1-V5), all marked *cresc.* and *ff*.
- Bass Clarinet (B.Cl.):** Features a "guttural scream" instruction with a "hold to end" box. The notation includes slurs and *ff* dynamics.
- Electric Piano (E. Pno.):** Accompaniment with sustained chords and *ff* dynamics.
- Electric Bass (E.B.):** Rhythmic accompaniment with *ff* dynamics.
- Percussion (Perc.):** Complex rhythmic patterns with *ff* dynamics.
- Vibraphone (Vib.):** Rhythmic accompaniment with *ff* dynamics.

Performance instructions and markings in the second system (starting at measure 42) include:

- "Hold Through" for the strings.
- "abrupt cut off" for strings, E. Pno., E.B., Perc., and Vib.
- Final *ff* markings on the strings and E. Pno.

Score

# If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

Blake Buehler

Warm but aggressive  $\text{♩} = 84$

007

(held scream)

Tenor

Clarinet in B $\flat$

Trumpet in B $\flat$

Cello

Electric Piano

Electric Guitar

Bass Guitar

Drum Set

T

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

©Blake Buehler 2024

If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

10

T

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

*f*

---

14

T

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

*mf*

*sub. mp*

*p*

*sub. mp*

minimalist surf-punk groove

*sub. p*

It's not that I'm not o-ver it It's just that I can't quit Scratch-ing dirt-off fin-ger nails



If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

18

T  
fin-ding O-ri-on in blood skies I on-ly see your face in crowds full of stran-gers dark sha-dows of pearl rings

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

22

T  
I think I used to love you but I would-'nt trade the pain for it.

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

26 *f*

T  
Can you keep a sec - ret? Half doomed and sem-i sweet the De-vil's in the de-tails of the crimes that we co-mmit There's tra-gic art

B♭ Cl. *f*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno. *mf*

E. Gtr. *f*

Bass *f*

D. S. *f*

31

T  
in your mag-ne-ti-sm I won't ask you for a-ny-thing ex-cept to stay a-live\_\_ Ex-cept to stay a-li-i-i-ve

B♭ Cl. *mf*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

35

T

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

39

*mf*

T

Kiss you be-hind back-seats so she does-'nt see Young vol - can-oes on the bed - room floor closed doors and drawers de-light I

B♭ Cl.

*sub. mp*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

*sub. p*

E. Pno.

*p*

E. Gtr.

*sub. mp*

Bass

*sub. mp*

D. S.

*sub. p*

If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

43

T  
on - ly see your face in crowds full of stran - gers dark sha - dows of pearl rings... I think I used... to love you but I would-'nt trade the pain for

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.  
*mf*

E. Gtr.  
*mf*

Bass  
*mf*

D. S.

47

T  
it. Can you keep a sec - ret? Half

B♭ Cl.  
*mf*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.  
*f*

E. Gtr.  
*f*

Bass  
*f*

D. S.  
*f*

If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

50

T  
doomed and sem - i sweet the De - vil's in the de - tails of the crimes that we commit There's tra - gic art

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

54

T  
in your mag - ne - ti - sm I won't ask you for a - ny - thing ex - cept to stay a - live — Ex - cept to stay a - li - i - i - ve

B♭ Cl.  
*mf*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.  
*mf*

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

58 *f*

T I see you now for who you are Be - hind

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno. *mf*

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S. *mf*



62

T \_ closed \_ doors \_ Be - hind the trig - ger \_ Be - hind \_ the trig - ger in crowds full of

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

66

T  
stran - gers Full of stran - gers I've got all this love to keep to my - self... In crowds

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.  
*mp*

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

70

T  
full of stran - gers So pull it... How could you How could you How Can you keep a sec - ret? Half

B♭ Cl.  
*f* *mf*

B♭ Tpt.  
*fp*

Vc.  
*mp*

E. Pno.  
*f*

E. Gtr.  
*p* *f*

Bass  
*f*

D. S.  
*f*

If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)

74

T  
doomed and sem-i sweet the De-vil's in the de-tails of the crimes that we commit There's tra-gic art

B♭ Cl. *f*

B♭ Tpt. *mp* *mf* *sub. p*

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

78

T  
in your mag-ne-ti-sm I won't ask you for a-ny-thing ex-cept to stay a-live— Ex-cept to stay Can you keep a sec-ret? Half

B♭ Cl. *mf* *f* *mf*

B♭ Tpt. *mf* *fp* *mf*

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.



If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me

82

T  
doomed and sem-i sweet the De-vil's in the de-tails of the crimes that we commit There's tra-gic art

B♭ Cl.  
*f*

B♭ Tpt.  
*sub. p*

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

86

T  
in your mag-ne-ti-sm I won't ask you for a-ny-thing ex-cept to stay a-live— Ex-cept to stay a-li-i-i-ve

B♭ Cl.  
*mf*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

Bass

D. S.

Score

# There Will Always Be a Light On

Blake Buehler

008 Slow Jam ♩ = 87

The score is for a 4/4 piece in D major, marked 'Slow Jam' with a tempo of 87 bpm. The instrumentation includes Tenor, Clarinet in Bb, Trumpet in Bb, Cello, Electric Piano, Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Drum Set, Percussion, and Vibraphone. The Electric Piano part features a melodic line in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand, marked *mf*. The Drum Set part provides a 'Rock groove, sim. "So Much (For) Stardust"' pattern, also marked *mf*. The other instruments (Tenor, Clarinet, Trumpet, Cello, Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, and Vibraphone) have rests throughout the first three measures.

©Blake Buehler 2024

There Will Always Be a Light On

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with the following parts from top to bottom:

- T.** (Tenor): Rests throughout the section.
- B♭ Cl.** (B-flat Clarinet): Plays a melodic line starting in the second measure with a *fp* dynamic, featuring a crescendo and decrescendo.
- B♭ Tpt.** (B-flat Trumpet): Mirrors the B-flat Clarinet's melodic line with a *fp* dynamic.
- Vc.** (Violoncello): Mirrors the B-flat Clarinet's melodic line with a *fp* dynamic.
- E. Pno.** (Electric Piano): Features a continuous eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand.
- E.Gtr.** (Electric Guitar): Rests throughout the section.
- E.B.** (Electric Bass): Rests throughout the section.
- D. S.** (Drum Set): Plays a steady eighth-note pattern throughout the section.
- Perc.** (Percussion): Plays a rhythmic pattern starting in the second measure with a *f* dynamic, transitioning to *mf* in the third measure.
- Vib.** (Vibraphone): Plays a melodic line starting in the second measure with a *mf* dynamic.

There Will Always Be a Light On

7

*mf*

T

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

I left a light on re -

*fp*

*fp*

*fp*

*p*

*mf*

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. The score is arranged for a vocal line and a full band. The vocal line (T) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. The lyrics 'I left a light on re -' are written below the vocal line. The instrumental parts include: B $\flat$  Clarinet (B $\flat$  Cl.) in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#), playing a melodic line with *fp* dynamics; B $\flat$  Trumpet (B $\flat$  Tpt.) in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps, also playing a melodic line with *fp* dynamics; Violoncello (Vc.) in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp, playing a simple harmonic line with *fp* dynamics; Electric Piano (E. Pno.) in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp, playing a rhythmic accompaniment with a *p* dynamic; Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.) in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp, which is silent; Electric Bass (E.B.) in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp, playing a simple bass line with a *mf* dynamic; Double Bass (D. S.) in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes; Percussion (Perc.) in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes; and Vibraphone (Vib.) in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp, playing a melodic line with a *mf* dynamic. The score is divided into three measures. The first measure contains the vocal line and the instrumental accompaniment. The second measure continues the vocal line and instrumental accompaniment. The third measure contains the vocal line and instrumental accompaniment, with the vocal line ending on a long note.

There Will Always Be a Light On

10

T

sis-ting your un-true blues, Cig-a-rette day-dreams too, you're the grudge I re - fuse to

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

*mf*

Vib.

The musical score is for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. It features a vocal line starting at measure 10. The lyrics are: 'sis-ting your un-true blues, Cig-a-rette day-dreams too, you're the grudge I re - fuse to'. The score includes parts for Tenor (T), B $\flat$  Clarinet (Cl.), B $\flat$  Trumpet (Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.), Electric Bass (E.B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The percussion part has a dynamic marking of *mf*. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8.

There Will Always Be a Light On

13

T  
8  
lose. You are the riv-ers and I am the gray sky Pol - ar mag-nets pull-ing star-ry eyes

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.  
*p*

E.Gtr.  
*f*

E.B.  
*mf*

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. It features a vocal line (T) with lyrics: 'lose. You are the riv-ers and I am the gray sky Pol - ar mag-nets pull-ing star-ry eyes'. The score includes parts for B♭ Clarinet (Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.) with a piano (*p*) dynamic, Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.) with a forte (*f*) dynamic, Electric Bass (E.B.) with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The score is marked with measure numbers 13, 14, and 15.

There Will Always Be a Light On

16

T  
Talk-ing to the mir-ror un-read re-ply I don't know what to say Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon *f*

B $\flat$  Cl. *mf*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *mf*

Vc. *mp*

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. The score is written for a full band and includes a vocal line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The piece begins at measure 16. The vocal line (T) has lyrics: 'Talk-ing to the mir-ror un-read re-ply I don't know what to say Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon'. The vocal line is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The B $\flat$  Clarinet (B $\flat$  Cl.) and B $\flat$  Trumpet (B $\flat$  Tpt.) parts are marked with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The Violoncello (Vc.) part is marked with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The Electric Piano (E. Pno.) part consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a single bass note in the left hand. The Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.) part features a complex, rhythmic pattern with many accidentals and a 'x' symbol indicating a muted note. The Electric Bass (E.B.) part has a simple eighth-note accompaniment. The Drum Set (D. S.) part is indicated by a double bar line with a slash, suggesting a specific drum pattern. The Percussion (Perc.) part has a simple eighth-note accompaniment. The Vibraphone (Vib.) part is indicated by a double bar line with a slash, suggesting it is not played in this section.

There Will Always Be a Light On

19

T  
8  
Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone      Would I \_\_\_ miss the way      Miss the way      Would I \_\_\_ miss the way

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". It consists of ten staves. The top staff is for the Tenor (T) voice, with lyrics: "Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone", "Would I \_\_\_ miss the way", "Miss the way", and "Would I \_\_\_ miss the way". The second staff is for B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), the third for B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), and the fourth for Violoncello (Vc.). The fifth staff is for Electric Piano (E. Pno.), the sixth for Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.), the seventh for Electric Bass (E.B.), the eighth for Double Bass (D. S.), the ninth for Percussion (Perc.), and the tenth for Vibraphone (Vib.). The score is in 8/8 time and the key signature has two sharps (F# and C#).



There Will Always Be a Light On

22

T  
8  
Miss the way Fighting my way out of Bab - y-lon Beau-ti-ful days are now foregone

B♭ Cl.  
*fp* *mf*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. It features a vocal line (T) with lyrics: 'Miss the way Fighting my way out of Bab - y-lon Beau-ti-ful days are now foregone'. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The lyrics are placed below the notes. The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.), Electric Bass (E.B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The B♭ Cl. part has dynamic markings *fp* and *mf*. The E.Gtr. part has a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed notes and some notes marked with 'x'. The D. S. part has a simple rhythmic pattern of slashes. The Perc. and Vib. parts are mostly rests.

There Will Always Be a Light On

25

T

8

Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way you hate \_\_\_ me \_\_\_

B♭ Cl.

*fp*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. It features a vocal line (T) with lyrics: 'Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way you hate \_\_\_ me \_\_\_'. The score includes parts for B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line is in treble clef. The B♭ Cl. and B♭ Tpt. parts are in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The Vc. part is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The E. Pno. part consists of two staves (treble and bass clef) with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The E. Gtr. part is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The E. B. part is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The D. S., Perc., and Vib. parts are in their respective clefs with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The B♭ Cl. part has a dynamic marking of *fp* (fortissimo piano) and a hairpin indicating a crescendo.

There Will Always Be a Light On

28

T

8

woah

B♭ Cl.

*fp* *fp*

B♭ Tpt.

*fp* *fp*

Vc.

*fp* *fp*

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

*f* *mf*

Vib.

*mf*

The image shows a page of a musical score for the piece "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout with ten staves. From top to bottom, the staves are: Tenor (T), B-flat Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B-flat Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Drums (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The music is in the key of D major (indicated by two sharps) and 8/8 time. The Tenor part begins with a melodic line and includes a vocalization "woah" with a long horizontal line underneath. The woodwinds and strings play a rhythmic accompaniment, with dynamic markings such as *fp* (fortissimo piano) and *f* (forte). The percussion part features a strong rhythmic pattern starting with a *f* dynamic. The electric piano and vibraphone provide harmonic support with sustained chords and textures.

There Will Always Be a Light On

31

*mf*

T

You left a door o - pen that

B $\flat$  Cl.

*fp* *fp*

B $\flat$  Tpt.

*fp* *fp*

Vc.

*fp* *fp*

E. Pno.

*p*

E.Gtr.

E.B.

*mf*

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. It features a vocal line starting at measure 31 with the lyrics 'You left a door o - pen that'. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 7/8 time signature. The accompaniment includes a B-flat Clarinet, B-flat Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano, Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Double Bass, Drums, Percussion, and Vibraphone. The B-flat Clarinet, B-flat Trumpet, and Violoncello parts have dynamic markings of *fp* (fortissimo piano) with hairpins. The Electric Piano part has a dynamic marking of *p* (piano). The Electric Bass part has a dynamic marking of *mf* (mezzo-forte). The Drums part shows a pattern of eighth notes and rests. The Percussion part shows a pattern of eighth notes and rests. The Vibraphone part shows a pattern of eighth notes and rests.

There Will Always Be a Light On

34

T  
8  
I can't seem to close Ven-om is in my hopes — you're the last real re - fuge — Oh, with my

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

*mf*

*mp*

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is for a full band and includes a vocal line. The vocal line starts at measure 34 and has lyrics: "I can't seem to close Ven-om is in my hopes — you're the last real re - fuge — Oh, with my". The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet, B♭ Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano, Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Drums, Percussion, and Vibraphone. The Electric Piano part has a continuous eighth-note accompaniment. The Electric Bass part has a simple bass line. The Percussion part has a steady eighth-note pattern. The Electric Guitar part has a single note held for the duration of the phrase. The Drums part has a simple drum pattern. The Vibraphone part is silent. The score is in the key of D major and 4/4 time. The tempo is not specified. The dynamics are marked as *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mp* (mezzo-piano).

There Will Always Be a Light On

37

T  
8  
dy - ing breath I would tell you tell you tell you tell you You are the riv-ers and I am the gray sky

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.  
*p*

E. Gtr.  
*f*

E. B.  
*mf*

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is for a full band and includes a vocal line. The vocal line starts at measure 37 and has lyrics: "dy - ing breath I would tell you tell you tell you tell you You are the riv-ers and I am the gray sky". The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet, B♭ Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano (piano), Electric Guitar (f), Electric Bass (mf), Drums, Percussion, and Vibraphone. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature (C). The vocal line is in a soprano clef. The instrumental parts are in various clefs: B♭ Clarinet and B♭ Trumpet in soprano clef, Violoncello in bass clef, Electric Piano in grand staff, Electric Guitar in soprano clef, Electric Bass in bass clef, Drums in a drum set clef, Percussion in a drum set clef, and Vibraphone in soprano clef. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains measures 37-40, and the second system contains measures 41-44. The vocal line continues through both systems. The instrumental parts have various dynamics and articulations. The electric piano part has a piano (*p*) dynamic. The electric guitar part has a forte (*f*) dynamic. The electric bass part has a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic. The drums and percussion parts have various rhythmic patterns. The vibraphone part is mostly silent.

There Will Always Be a Light On

39

T  
8  
Pol - ar mag-nets pull-ing star-ry eyes ——— Talk-ing to the mir-ror un-read re-ply I don't know what to say

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is for measures 39, 40, and 41. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The instruments listed are: Tenor (T), B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.), Electric Bass (E.B.), Drums (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The Tenor part has lyrics: "Pol - ar mag-nets pull-ing star-ry eyes ——— Talk-ing to the mir-ror un-read re-ply I don't know what to say". The Electric Piano part features a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and a single bass note in the left hand. The Electric Guitar part has a rhythmic pattern of chords and single notes. The Electric Bass part has a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The Drums part has a simple drum pattern. The Percussion part has a simple pattern of eighth notes. The Vibraphone part is silent. The B♭ Clarinet and B♭ Trumpet parts are also silent.

There Will Always Be a Light On

42 *f*

T  
8  
Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone Would I — miss the way

B♭ Cl.  
*mf*

B♭ Tpt.  
*mf*

Vc.  
*mp*

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. It begins at measure 42. The vocal line (T) starts with a forte (*f*) dynamic and includes the lyrics: 'Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone Would I — miss the way'. The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.) with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic, and Violoncello (Vc.) with a mezzo-piano (*mp*) dynamic. The Electric Piano (E. Pno.) part is mostly silent. The Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.) part features a rhythmic pattern of chords with some muted notes (marked with 'x'). The Electric Bass (E.B.) part provides a steady bass line. The Drum Set (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.) parts are also present but mostly silent.



There Will Always Be a Light On

45

T  
8  
Miss the way Would I miss the way Miss the way Fighting my way out of Bab - y-lon

B♭ Cl.  
*fp* *mf*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. The page is numbered 45. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line (T) starts with the lyrics 'Miss the way Would I miss the way Miss the way Fighting my way out of Bab - y-lon'. The vocal melody is written in a treble clef. The B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) and B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.) parts are also in treble clef. The B♭ Clarinet part has dynamic markings *fp* and *mf*. The Violoncello (Vc.) part is in bass clef. The Electric Piano (E. Pno.) part is in treble and bass clefs. The Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.) part is in treble clef and features a rhythmic pattern of chords. The Electric Bass (E. B.) part is in bass clef. The Drum Set (D. S.) part is shown with a series of slashes indicating a steady rhythm. The Percussion (Perc.) and Vibraphone (Vib.) parts are shown with rests.

There Will Always Be a Light On

48

T  
8  
Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone      Would I \_\_\_ miss the way      Miss the way      Would I \_\_\_ miss the way

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The vocal line (T) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone      Would I \_\_\_ miss the way      Miss the way      Would I \_\_\_ miss the way". The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet, B♭ Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.), Electric Bass (E.B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The E. Pno., D. S., Perc., and Vib. parts are mostly silent, indicated by a horizontal line with a bar through it. The E.Gtr. part features a rhythmic pattern of chords with some muted notes (marked with 'x'). The E.B. part plays a steady eighth-note bass line.

There Will Always Be a Light On

51

T  
8  
Miss the way you hate me woah The

B $\flat$  Cl.  
*fp*

B $\flat$  Tpt.  
*fp*

Vc.  
*fp*

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.  
*f*  
6

Vib.

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The vocal line (T) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "Miss the way you hate me woah The". The instrumental parts include B $\flat$  Clarinet, B $\flat$  Trumpet, and Violoncello (Vc.), all marked with *fp* (fortissimo piano). The Electric Piano (E. Pno.) part is shown in both treble and bass clefs. The Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.) part features a rhythmic pattern of chords and a solo section marked with *f* and a sixteenth-note figure. The Electric Bass (E. B.) part provides a steady bass line. The Drum Set (D. S.) and Percussion (Perc.) parts are also present, with the Percussion part marked with *f* and a sixteenth-note figure. The Vibraphone (Vib.) part is shown in treble clef.

There Will Always Be a Light On

54

T  
8  
kids are dy-ing in the bath-room back-room lov-ers, got no Star - dust to get them through They say

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S. half-time feel

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. It features a vocal line (T) with lyrics: 'kids are dy-ing in the bath-room back-room lov-ers, got no Star - dust to get them through They say'. The score includes parts for B♭ Clarinet (Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Drums (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line starts at measure 54. The piano accompaniment features a sustained chord in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The drums play a 'half-time feel' pattern, and the vibraphone provides harmonic support.

There Will Always Be a Light On

58

T

8

fight for what you love then give me a life worth fight-ing for \_\_\_ I go back to twi-light Ap-ril \_\_\_\_\_

B $\flat$  Cl.

B $\flat$  Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is for a full band and includes a vocal line. The vocal line is in the key of D major and 8/8 time. The lyrics are: "fight for what you love then give me a life worth fight-ing for \_\_\_ I go back to twi-light Ap-ril \_\_\_\_\_". The instrumental parts include B $\flat$  Clarinet, B $\flat$  Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano, Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Drums, and Vibraphone. The piano part features a melodic line in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The drums play a steady quarter-note pattern. The vibraphone plays a melodic line that follows the vocal line.

There Will Always Be a Light On

62

T *f*  
I still don't know what to sa - a - a - ay. Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon

B $\flat$  Cl. *mf*

B $\flat$  Tpt. *mf*

Vc. *mp*

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S. fill ———— return to regular time

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. It features a vocal line starting at measure 62. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: 'I still don't know what to sa - a - a - ay. Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon'. The vocal line is marked with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The instrumental parts include: B $\flat$  Clarinet (B $\flat$  Cl.) in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#), marked mezzo-forte (*mf*); B $\flat$  Trumpet (B $\flat$  Tpt.) in treble clef with a key signature of three sharps, marked mezzo-forte (*mf*); Violoncello (Vc.) in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp, marked mezzo-piano (*mp*); Electric Piano (E. Pno.) in grand staff with a key signature of one sharp; Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.) in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp, playing a rhythmic pattern of chords; Electric Bass (E.B.) in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes; Drum Set (D. S.) with a key signature of one sharp, featuring a 'fill' section followed by a 'return to regular time' section; Percussion (Perc.) in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp, playing a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes; and Vibraphone (Vib.) in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp, playing a melodic line.

There Will Always Be a Light On

66

T  
8  
Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone      Would I \_\_\_ miss the way      Miss the way      Would I \_\_\_ miss the way

B♭ Cl.

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is for a full band and includes a vocal line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line (T) starts at measure 66 and has lyrics: "Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone", "Would I \_\_\_ miss the way", "Miss the way", and "Would I \_\_\_ miss the way". The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet (Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The E. Gtr. part features a complex rhythmic pattern with many accidentals and slurs. The E. B. part has a steady eighth-note bass line. The D. S., Perc., and Vib. parts are mostly rests with some rhythmic markings.

There Will Always Be a Light On

69

T  
8  
Miss the way      Fighting my way out of Bab - y-lon      Beau-ti-ful days are now foregone

B♭ Cl.  
*fp*      *mf*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format. The vocal line (T) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "Miss the way", "Fighting my way out of Bab - y-lon", and "Beau-ti-ful days are now foregone". The vocal line has a melodic contour that rises and then falls. The B♭ Clarinet (Cl.) and B♭ Trumpet (Tpt.) parts are in the same key and time signature. The Clarinet part features a melodic line with dynamics *fp* and *mf*. The Trumpet part has a rhythmic accompaniment. The Violoncello (Vc.) part is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp. The Electric Piano (E. Pno.) part is in grand staff with a key signature of one sharp. The Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.) part is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp, featuring a rhythmic accompaniment with palm mutes. The Electric Bass (E. B.) part is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp, featuring a rhythmic accompaniment. The Drum Set (D. S.) part is in a standard drum notation. The Percussion (Perc.) part is in a standard drum notation. The Vibraphone (Vib.) part is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp.



There Will Always Be a Light On

72

T

Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way

B♭ Cl.

*fp*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". It features a vocal line (T) with lyrics: "Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way". The score includes parts for B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Drums (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line is in treble clef. The B♭ Cl. and B♭ Tpt. parts are in treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). The Vc. part is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The E. Pno. part is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs) with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The E. Gtr. part is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The E. B. part is in bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The D. S., Perc., and Vib. parts are in their respective clefs and key signatures.

There Will Always Be a Light On

75 *f*

T  
8 Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon Beau-ti- ful days are now fore-gone Would I miss the way

B♭ Cl. *mf*

B♭ Tpt. *mf*

Vc. *mp*

E. Pno. *mp*

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib. *f*

The musical score is for the song 'There Will Always Be a Light On'. It features a vocal line (T) with lyrics: 'Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon Beau-ti- ful days are now fore-gone Would I miss the way'. The score includes parts for B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Drums (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). Dynamics include *f*, *mf*, and *mp*. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 8/8.

There Will Always Be a Light On

78

T  
8  
Miss the way— Would I— miss the way Miss the way—

B♭ Cl.  
*fp*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with ten staves. The top staff is for the Tenor (T) voice, with lyrics: "Miss the way— Would I— miss the way Miss the way—". The second staff is for the B-flat Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), marked with a forte-piano (*fp*) dynamic. The third staff is for the B-flat Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.). The fourth staff is for the Violoncello (Vc.). The fifth staff is for the Electric Piano (E. Pno.), showing chords in both treble and bass clefs. The sixth staff is for the Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), featuring a rhythmic pattern of chords with some muted notes indicated by 'x' marks. The seventh staff is for the Electric Bass (E. B.), with a steady eighth-note bass line. The eighth staff is for the Double Bass (D. S.), showing a simple rhythmic pattern. The ninth staff is for the Percussion (Perc.), with a pattern of quarter and eighth notes. The tenth staff is for the Vibraphone (Vib.), with a melodic line. The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 8/8. The page number 78 is written above the first staff.

There Will Always Be a Light On

80

T  
8  
Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone Would I miss the way

B♭ Cl.  
*mf*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format. The vocal line (T) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a common time signature. The lyrics are: "Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon Beau-ti-ful days are now fore-gone Would I miss the way". The vocal line is accompanied by a B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.) and a B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.). The piano accompaniment (E. Pno.) is in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The electric guitar (E.Gtr.) part features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with a tremolo effect. The electric bass (E.B.) part is in bass clef and plays a steady eighth-note rhythm. The double bass (D. S.) part is in bass clef and plays a steady eighth-note rhythm. The percussion (Perc.) part is in bass clef and plays a steady eighth-note rhythm. The vibraphone (Vib.) part is in treble clef and plays a steady eighth-note rhythm.

There Will Always Be a Light On

83

T

Miss the way Would I miss the way Miss the way you hate me wo-o-o-o - o -

B♭ Cl.

*fp*

B♭ Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E.Gtr.

E.B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is for a full band and includes a vocal line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line (T) has lyrics: "Miss the way Would I miss the way Miss the way you hate me wo-o-o-o - o -". The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E.Gtr.), Electric Bass (E.B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The B♭ Clarinet part has a dynamic marking of *fp* (fortissimo piano). The score is divided into three measures. The first measure contains the vocal line and the instrumental accompaniment. The second measure continues the vocal line and instrumental accompaniment. The third measure concludes the vocal line and instrumental accompaniment.

There Will Always Be a Light On

86

T. *ah* You are the riv-ers

B♭ Cl. *fp*

B♭ Tpt. *fp*

Vc. *fp*

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B. *mf*

D. S.

Perc. *mf*

Vib. *mf*

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. The vocal line (T.) is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/8 time signature. It begins with a fermata and the vocalization 'ah', followed by the lyrics 'You are the riv-ers'. The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet, B♭ Trumpet, and Violoncello, all marked with *fp* (fortissimo piano) dynamics. The piano accompaniment (E. Pno.) features a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes in the right hand and sustained chords in the left hand. The electric guitar (E. Gtr.) and electric bass (E. B.) parts are marked with *mf* (mezzo-forte) dynamics. The drum set (D. S.) and percussion (Perc.) parts are also marked with *mf*. The vibraphone (Vib.) part is marked with *mf* and features a melodic line.

There Will Always Be a Light On

89

T  
8  
Fight-ing my way fight-ing my way fight-ing Beau-ti-ful days

B $\flat$  Cl.  
*fp*

B $\flat$  Tpt.  
*fp*

Vc.  
*fp*

E. Pno.

E. Grt.  
*f*

E. B.  
*f*

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is for a full band and includes a vocal line. The key signature has two sharps (F# and C#), and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line (T) starts at measure 89 with the lyrics "Fight-ing my way fight-ing my way fight-ing Beau-ti-ful days". The instrumental parts include Bb Clarinet (B $\flat$  Cl.), Bb Trumpet (B $\flat$  Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Grt.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The E. Pno., E. Grt., and E. B. parts feature dynamic markings of *fp* and *f*. The E. Grt. part has a complex rhythmic pattern with many 'x' marks indicating fretted notes. The D. S. part consists of a steady eighth-note pattern. The Perc. part has a simple rhythmic pattern. The Vib. part has a few chords. The score is written on ten staves.

There Will Always Be a Light On

92

T

8

Miss the way with my dy - ing breath I would tell you tell you tell you tell you fight-ing my way and I

B> Cl.

B> Tpt.

Vc.

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The page number is 92. The score is arranged for a vocal soloist (T) and a full band. The vocal line is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 8/8. The lyrics are: "Miss the way with my dy - ing breath I would tell you tell you tell you tell you fight-ing my way and I". The instrumental parts include: B> Clarinet (B> Cl.), B> Trumpet (B> Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Drums (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with many beamed sixteenth notes. The electric guitar part has a similar rhythmic pattern with some muted notes indicated by 'x' marks. The electric bass part has a simple, steady bass line. The drums and percussion parts provide a steady accompaniment. The vibraphone part has a melodic line with some grace notes.



There Will Always Be a Light On

95

T  
8  
miss the way, miss the way, — You left a door o - pen that I

B $\flat$  Cl.  
*fp*

B $\flat$  Tpt.  
*fp*

Vc.  
*fp*

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib.

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "There Will Always Be a Light On". The score is for a full band and includes a vocal line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line (T) starts at measure 95 with the lyrics "miss the way, miss the way, — You left a door o - pen that I". The instrumental parts include B $\flat$  Clarinet (Cl.), B $\flat$  Trumpet (Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Electric Bass (E. B.), Double Bass (D. S.), Percussion (Perc.), and Vibraphone (Vib.). The B $\flat$  Cl., B $\flat$  Tpt., and Vc. parts have a dynamic marking of *fp* (fortissimo piano) starting in measure 97. The E. Pno. part features a complex rhythmic pattern in the right hand and a sustained chord in the left hand. The E. Gtr. part has a rhythmic accompaniment with some muted notes. The E. B. part has a simple bass line. The D. S. part has a steady eighth-note pattern. The Perc. part has a simple drum pattern. The Vib. part has a melodic line with some vibrato.

There Will Always Be a Light On

98

T. *8*  
The kids are dy - ing — Would I miss the way — Miss the way —

B♭ Cl. *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp*

B♭ Tpt. *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp*

Vc. *fp* *fp* *fp* *fp*

E. Pno.

E. Gtr.

E. B.

D. S.

Perc.

Vib. *f* *6*

The musical score is for the piece 'There Will Always Be a Light On', starting at measure 98. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line (T.) has lyrics: 'The kids are dy - ing — Would I miss the way — Miss the way —'. The instrumental parts include B♭ Clarinet, B♭ Trumpet, Violoncello, Electric Piano, Electric Guitar, Electric Bass, Drums (D. S.), Percussion, and Vibraphone. The woodwinds and strings play a melodic line with accents, while the piano provides a rhythmic accompaniment with chords. The electric guitar plays a complex, rhythmic pattern. The vibraphone has a melodic line with a forte dynamic and a sixteenth-note figure.

## CHAPTER 4 – *AQUA*: ANALYSIS, EXPLANATION, AND REFLECTION

Writing *AQUA* was my first attempt to bridge two of my musical interests consciously and explicitly: rock music and contemporary chamber music. To write something readable and playable by both chamber musicians and popular musicians proved challenging because, while chamber musicians are obviously comfortable with standard notation, popular musicians tend to prefer reading off lead sheets or learning aurally. I also found it challenging to achieve the effects of a song created in a recording studio in a piece intended for live performance. While popular music songs are obviously played live, it is in a quite different context and venue than chamber music. The idioms used throughout this work blend rock stylism with chamber playability.

I am a queer transgender man, and the content of this composition is through this lens. The intent of this composition is to continue, elaborate, and react to *So Much (For) Stardust*. *So Much (For) Stardust* begins where *Folie á Deux* ends, and my music begins where the conglomerate of Fall Out Boy's music ends. Thus, musically, it takes great inspiration from *So Much (For) Stardust* as well as the rest of Fall Out Boy's discography. Lyrically, it draws on both Fall Out Boy and from the things that inspire Fall Out Boy's lyrics, including popular culture and personal experiences, but through my personal lens.

## Microscopic Matters and the Compositional Process

For this project I adapted my compositional process to align with that of Fall Out Boy's. I began by writing, text setting it melodically, then building the instrumental parts and song trajectory around the it. I aimed to adhere to the melodic conventions that Fall Out Boy uses, namely, diatonic stepwise motion, leaps for emphasis, and agogic accents. The chorus of "There Will Always Be A Light On" (musical example O) shows all these facets. Particularly, "would I miss the way" features the use of agogic accent for 'I,' 'miss,' and 'way,' and leaps up to 'miss' for extra emphasis.

42 *f*  
Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y - lon Beau - ti - ful days are now fore-gone Would I \_\_\_ miss the way

45  
Miss the way \_\_\_ Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y - lon

### Musical Example O: Chorus of "There Will Always Be A Light On"

I also use musical quotations from *So Much (for) Stardust* to connect the two works, particularly in the first movement of *AQUA*. This is part of the goal to make the transition between the works seamless. The best way to listen to *AQUA* would be to listen to the entirety of *So Much (For) Stardust* and crossfade into *AQUA* during the final twenty seconds of "So Much (For) Stardust." In the opening eighteen bars of *AQUA* the clarinet and trumpet parts feature fragments of the vocal lines from "So Much (For) Stardust" as the movement builds to the first climactic hit in m. 19. The piano part and

drum groove also use similar patterns to “So Much (For) Stardust” throughout, not directly quoting it, but reminiscent of the general aesthetic. The cello part from m. 28 to the end of the first movement uses fragments of the violin part from “I Am My Own Muse.”

The other movement saturated with *So Much (For) Stardust* references is the final movement, “There Will Always Be A Light On.”<sup>73</sup> This was intentional, as to capstone the culmination of *AQUA*’s Fall Out Boy influences. The seventh movement of my work borrows its opening chord progression from the interludes of “So Much (For) Stardust,” and again uses modified versions of the piano pattern and drum groove, as to also connect the final movement to the first movement. Other more abstract musical references to *So Much (For) Stardust* include the opening of “From the Office of Paul R. McHugh,” which is modeled after the opening of Fall Out Boy’s “Heaven, Iowa,” and the vocal fragmentation at the end of “There Will Always Be a Light On” which, while employed differently than in “So Much (For) Stardust,” is inspired by that ending.

I used similar harmonic devices to those of Fall Out Boy such as power chords, tonal ambiguity, and diatonicism. The guitar parts frequently employ power chords, as

---

<sup>73</sup> For reference, the movement numbers and titles are as follows:  
Movement 1: Stardust Eulogy  
Movement 2: Welcome to the Show  
Movement 3: Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials  
Movement 4: From the Office of Paul R. McHugh  
Movement 5: Babylon  
Movement 6: If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me)  
Movement 7: There Will Always Be A Light On

illustrated in the intro of “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me)” (musical example P). As mentioned in the first chapter, harmonic ambiguity is a major element of Fall Out Boy’s harmonic language. The most tonally ambiguous movement is “From the Office of Paul R. McHugh,” (figure 10) which wanders in the E Dorian mode in the verses, cadences on B minor at the end of the chorus, half-cadences in F major at the end of the interlude, and half-cadences in B minor at the end of the bridge to transition back into the final chorus. Further clouding the tonal center, this movement’s final cadence is in B minor, but the movement does not end with a cadence – there is an F# pedal until the final bar, the final vocal note is a B natural, and the final piano note and note of the entire movement is a C#. Clearly, this movement does not adhere to a single tonal center. Other movements of mine that employ some tonal mixture and/or ambiguity include “Babylon,” “Stardust Eulogy,” and “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me).” “Babylon” has a prominent G pedal, but due to the intentionally chaotic nature of the movement does not necessarily stabilize this as ‘tonic.’ “Stardust Eulogy” has a repeating E-to-D pattern that does not strictly tonicize either key area. Finally, “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me)” does establish D as tonic, but ends on a half-cadence, which serves as a transition into the final movement.

Musical score for the song "If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning (in me)". The score includes parts for Tenor (T), B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), B♭ Trumpet (B♭ Tpt.), Violoncello (Vc.), Electric Piano (E. Pno.), Electric Guitar (E. Gtr.), Bass, and Double Bass (D. S.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The score features various dynamics such as *f* and *ff*. The electric guitar part is particularly prominent with power chords.

Musical Example P: Power chords in “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me)”

From the Office of Paul R. McHugh

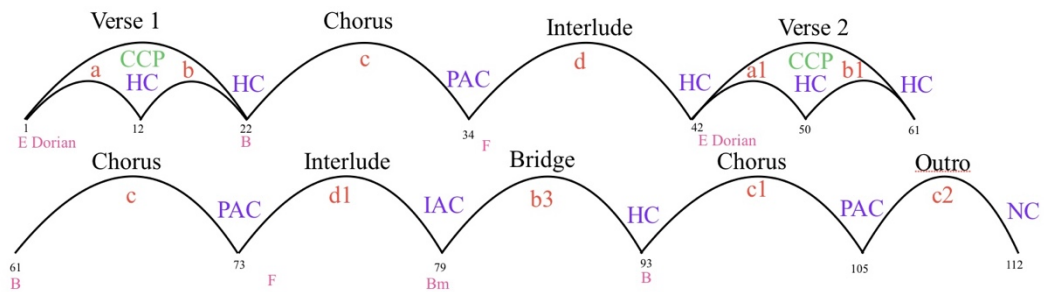


Figure 10: Form diagram of “From the Office of Paul R. McHugh” showcasing the various key areas

*AQUA* employs a “turnkey” modulation in the final chorus of “There Will Always Be A Light On.”<sup>74</sup> Fall Out Boy did not in use this convention in *So Much (For) Stardust*, but has previously employed this modulation; I emulate the turnkey modulation at the end of “Save Rock and Roll,” the final track of *Save Rock and Roll*, which uses the turnkey in the final chorus.<sup>75</sup> This is how I utilize it in “There Will Always Be a Light On,” as seen in musical example Q. It is worth noting that I queer the turnkey modulation by returning to the original key in the outro of the song, instead of leaving the outro in the new key, which would be considered more conventional.

---

<sup>74</sup> A “turnkey” modulation is a shorthand term for a modulation up by whole step, most typically employed at the end of a song to increase the intensity of the ending.

<sup>75</sup> Fall Out Boy, “Save Rock and Roll,” from *Save Rock and Roll*, Released April 12, 2013, Island Records.



There Will Always Be a Light On

72  
T  
Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way Would I \_\_\_ miss the way Miss the way

72  
B♭ Cl.  
*fp*

72  
B♭ Tpt.

72  
Vc.

72  
E. Pno.

72  
E. Gr.

72  
E. B.

72  
D. S.

72  
Perc.

72  
Vib.

E: V

F#: V

There Will Always Be a Light On

75 *f*

T Fight-ing my way out of Bab - y-lon Beau-ti- ful days are now fore-gone Would I miss the way

75 *mf*

B♭ Cl.

75 *mf*

B♭ Tpt.

75 *mp*

Vc.

75 *mp*

E. Pno.

75

E. Gtr.

E. B.

75

D. S.

75

Perc.

75

Vib.

*f*

i III IV V

Musical Example Q: Turnkey modulation in “There Will Always Be A Light On.”

Adapting my compositional process to align with Fall Out Boy's approach was central to the goal of emulating their music. By focusing on setting the text first and crafting melodies that adhere to the band's conventions, I was able to capture their signature style through the lens of my own creativity. Incorporating musical quotations from *So Much (For) Stardust* enhanced the cohesion and thematic continuity in the music between the two projects. Furthermore, by employing harmonic devices such as power chords, tonal ambiguity, and turnkey modulations, I not only paid homage to Fall Out Boy's musical language, but also expanded upon it to create a work that synthesized my musical inspiration with my creative output.

#### Macroscopic Matters: Form and Narrative

The forms used throughout *AQUA* may be broken into two main categories: song form and through-composed. Movements one, two and five employ a through-composed form, and movements three, four, six, and seven employ song forms. The movements employing song forms use the conventional sections (verses, choruses, etc.) in their conventional orders. An example of how I utilized song form is shown in the form diagram for "Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials." As may be observed in figure 11, all the conventional song sections are present and in their expected locations.

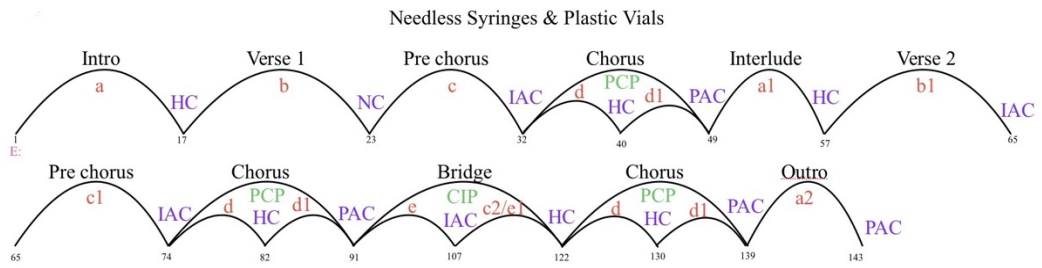


Figure 11: Form diagram of “Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials”

Two of the song forms I used exhibit modified formal elements. “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me)” (figure 12) is very conventional until the end, which doubles the length of the chorus but lacks an outro. This absence is to facilitate the immediate (attacca) start of the final movement. The other movement which deviates from expectations in two significant ways is “From the Office of Paul R. McHugh” (figure 13). The first is its lack of intro. This movement dives directly into the first verse, as does the opening of Fall Out Boy’s “Heaven, Iowa.” Secondly, like in “I Am My Own Muse,” this movement omits pre-choruses, going directly from verse to chorus. “From the Office of Paul R. McHugh” is meant to be a synthesis of those two tracks from *So Much (For) Stardust*.

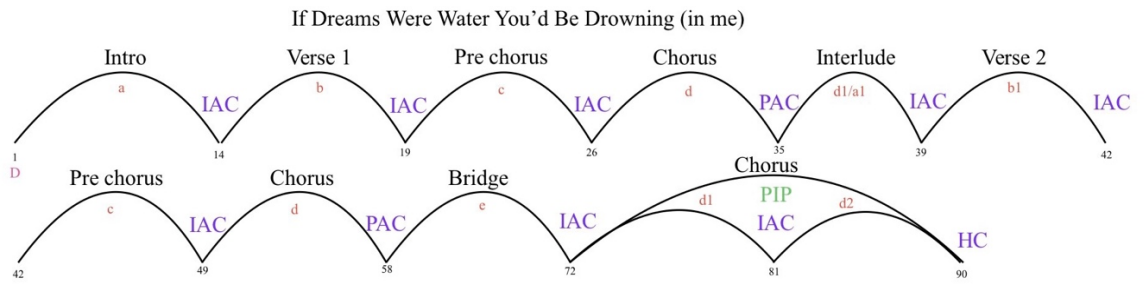


Figure 12: Form diagram of “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me)”

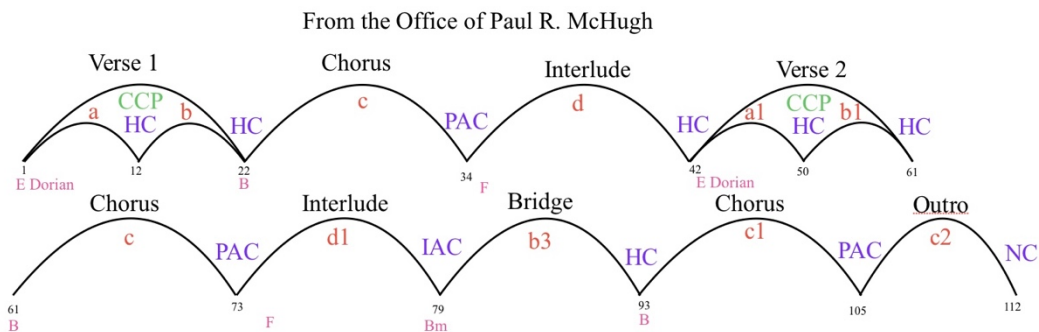


Figure 13: Form diagram of “From the Office of Paul R. McHugh”

Two of the three through-composed movements are spoken word-tracks, reflective of the spoken-word tracks on *So Much (For) Stardust*. The first movement, “Stardust Eulogy,” is an entirely instrumental track, and serves as both a bridge between *So Much (FOR) Stardust* and *AQUA*, and as an extended introduction to the cumulative narrative of *AQUA*. Thus, making this a through-composed movement serves the greater form and trajectory of *AQUA*. The second movement (also technically through-composed) is an unaccompanied, and open-ended, spoken-word movement, which is more of a monologue performance than a musical event. The fifth movement is the other

through-composed spoken word track and is something of a ‘beginning of the end’ movement: it catapults the work into the final narrative arc of movements six and seven. It builds from quiet calmness to chaotic entropy, increasing energy from a minimalistic piano-and-voice texture to each musical force fighting to be the loudest voice. The through-composed movements of *AQUA* serve as transitional interludes between the songs to connect the narrative, similar to how the through-composed movements in *So Much (For) Stardust* are used.

The movements of *AQUA* encompass two distinct forms: song form and through-composed structure. Movements three, four, six, and seven adhere to conventional song forms, while movements one, two, and five depart from this structure, utilizing through-composed forms which serve unique narrative and stylistic intentions. These varied approaches are reminiscent of Fall Out Boy’s eclectic style and contribute to the cohesive narrative of *AQUA*.

The context of *AQUA*’s narrative is that, in the musical universe it exists, it is an extension of *So Much (For) Stardust*’s thematic material; a continuation of what happens after the album fades out. This is why, as mentioned in the discussion of musical quotations, “So Much (For) Stardust” is so heavily referenced; ideally there is a seamless transition between the two works. *AQUA* is my response to *So Much (For) Stardust*, Fall Out Boy, and the forces and influences which have impacted my musical and personal journey.

The title of the entire work, *AQUA*, and the titles of the individual movements, all hold great narrative significance. *AQUA* is a double entendre: most obviously, it is an acronym for the true title, “A Queer Unrelenting Anger.” But the color ‘aqua’ also holds significance in both music and queer studies. Foremost, the term itself regardless context refers to water, and with it comes the imagery and implications of such a strong physical metaphor. Many compositions have been written about this element, notably Claude Debussy’s *La Mer*, Handel’s *Water Music*, and John Luther Adams’ *Become Ocean*, among others. In queer studies, water often metaphorically refers to fluidity.<sup>76</sup> Furthermore, the original eight-stripe pride flag had a turquoise, or aqua, stripe which signified magic and art.<sup>77</sup> As the pride flag gained commercial demand, the pink stripe was dropped due to a lack of readily available fabric, and turquoise and indigo were combined and replaced with royal blue.<sup>78</sup> Aqua ties music and queer life together through a blue hue.

The meaning behind each of the movement titles is also of great importance to the work as a whole. The first movement, “Stardust Eulogy,” signifies the end of *So Much (For) Stardust* and references the “Heaven, Iowa” lyric “Kiss my cheek, baby please,

---

<sup>76</sup> Emilio Amideo, *Queer Tidalectics: Linguistic and Sexual Fluidity in Contemporary Black Diasporic Literature*, (Northwestern University Press, 2021).

<sup>77</sup> LACDMH, “A Brief History of our LGBTQIA2-S Pride Flag.” *Cultural Traditions and Connections* (Blog), June 16, 2022.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*; the pink stripe signified sex and the indigo stripe signified serenity.

would you read my eulogy?” Movement two, “Welcome to the Show,” is simply that: a transitional movement to signify that *So Much (For) Stardust* has ended and that *AQUA* has officially begun. Movement three, “Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials,” references both lyrics in the pre-chorus and the medication I take on a regular basis.<sup>79</sup> This title signifies the over-regulatory legislation, medical malpractice, and general public obsession with transgender bodies.<sup>80</sup>

The title which holds the most to unpack is the fourth movement, “From the Office of Paul R. McHugh.” Paul McHugh is a conversion therapist who halted the study of gender-identity science and transgender care at Johns Hopkins Medicine in 1979 – which, at the time, was at the forefront of improving medical care for transgender and intersex people.<sup>81,82</sup> Johns Hopkins did not restart their gender care operations until 2017, but Dr. McHugh did not retire from his work there until 2018, just after I had the pleasure

---

<sup>79</sup> Now, I do need the syringes, and I’m pretty sure the vials are glass, but I digress.

<sup>80</sup> For a complete list of anti-transgender legislation in the United States, see “The Rise of Anti-Trans Bills in the US” by Minami Funakoshi and Disha Raychaudhuri, <https://www.reuters.com/graphics/USA-HEALTHCARE/TRANS-BILLS/zgvorreyapd/>.

<sup>81</sup> Amy Ellis Nutt, “Long Shadow Cast by Psychiatrist on Transgender Issues Finally Recedes at Johns Hopkins,” *The Washington Post*, April 5, 2017.

<sup>82</sup> Dr. McHugh was also a leading supporter of California Proposition 8, which as previously mentioned, Fall Out Boy vehemently spoke out against.



of attending his conversion clinic.<sup>83</sup> This visit to his operations did great damage to my psyche, especially as an already-conflicted teenager, but now fuels my desire to prove to him, and all others who agree with his dispositions, that transgender people are worthy of life.

The fifth movement title, “Babylon,” is an obvious metaphor for the biblical myth of Babylon, which is reflected as the movement unravels into a chaotic din. Movement six, “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me),” is an attempt to emulate Fall Out Boy’s titling tendencies. Especially in their earlier albums titles tend to be lengthy, abstractly related to the song content, and rarely include actual lyrics.<sup>84</sup> This is still true on *So Much (For) Stardust*, but to a lesser extent, such as in “Flu Game,” “Heaven, Iowa,” and “I Am My Own Muse.” Movement six, as well as some other long titles, take their inspiration from this titling method.

Movement seven, “There Will Always Be a Light On,” most directly references Fall Out Boy’s “Chicago Is So Two Years Ago,” the seventh track on *Take This To Your Grave*. The first lines of its chorus are “But there’s a light on in Chicago and I know I

---

<sup>83</sup> Amy Ellis Nutt, “Long Shadow Cast by Psychiatrist on Transgender Issues Finally Recedes at Johns Hopkins,” *The Washington Post*, April 5, 2017.

<sup>84</sup> Which brought us the incredible and poking-fun-worthy titles from Under The Cork Tree such as “I’ve Got A Dark Alley And A Bad Idea That Says You Should Shut Your Mouth (Summer Song),” “Champagne For My Real Friends, Real Pain For My Sham Friends,” and “I Slept With Someone In Fall Out Boy And All I Got Was This Stupid Song Written About Me.”

should be home.”<sup>85</sup> This title also speaks to the sentiment that, despite the rage and the general state of the world, there is always a reason to continue forward. The titles found throughout *AQUA* hold great significance to the overall narrative of the work through references to Fall Out Boy, queer culture, and my experiences as a queer person.

The lyrics of *AQUA* both reflect upon and emulate Fall Out Boy’s writing style. The lyrical content may be broken into three main categories: popular culture references, personal references, and Fall Out Boy references.<sup>86</sup> The use of popular culture references is akin to Fall Out Boy’s liberal use of such references in their own lyrics. For instance, “Needless Syringes & Plastic Vials” references the movie *Of an Age*, an Australian art film about coming out.<sup>87</sup> The last line of the film is “my beautiful boy,” which I quote in the chorus with the repeated “beautiful boy” motif. I take great inspiration from mythology, and reference the multi-cultural myths of Orpheus, Orion, and Babylon throughout the entire work. Orion, particularly, also relates to the title *AQUA*, as in the Greek version of this myth he is the son of Poseidon. Throughout the work I reference LGBTQ+ rights, experiences, and themes. Perhaps the most important line, to me, in this work, is “the kids are dying in the bathroom,” in the bridge of “There Will Always Be a

---

<sup>85</sup> Fall Out Boy, “Chicago Is So Two Years Ago,” from *Take This to Your Grave*. Released May 6, 2003, Fueled by Ramen,.

<sup>86</sup> While Fall Out Boy references may also be interpreted as popular culture references, they are in two separate categories for the purpose of illustrating connections between my work and my study of Fall Out Boy’s work.

<sup>87</sup> *Of An Age*, directed by Goron Stolevski (Roadshow Films, 2023).

Light On.” This is a reference to the murder of Nex Benedict, a transgender teenager in Oklahoma, which occurred amid writing this work.<sup>88</sup> My reaction to the news of this murder is revealed a few lines later, “they say fight for what you love, then give me a future worth fighting for.” The pain I felt for this child, and all the LGBTQ+ children watching their lives be ridiculed by conservative media outlets and government representatives, fuels a great deal of the rage I feel about the treatment of LGBTQ+ people in Western Society.

These LGBTQ+ references also extend into my experiences as a queer person. As previously mentioned, the fourth movement is inspired by my experiences in conversion therapy. The lines “unrequited anger in place of blinding lights,” “turn off the TV static,” and “a white room in dark days,” reflect imagery of what I remember from the facilities. The other lyrics in this movement are taken from journal entries, or reflections on journal entries, from the aftermath of this event. The sixth movement, “If Dreams Were Water You’d Be Drowning (in me)” is about the liminal space between realizing queerness and openly coming out, and my reflections on this space a decade after being in it. The lyrics which explicitly allude to this space are “Can you keep a secret? Half-doomed and semi-sweet, the Devil’s in the details of the crimes that we commit,” “kiss you behind backseats so she doesn’t see, young volcanoes on the bedroom floor, closed doors and

---

<sup>88</sup> Jo Yurcaba, “Friends remember Nex Benedict, Oklahoma student who died after school fight, as ‘fiery kid,’” *NBC News*, February 25, 2024.

drawers delight,” and “I’ve got all this love to keep to myself in crowds full of strangers.”<sup>89</sup> The reflections on this period are in the pre-chorus and the opening verse, with lyrics such as “It’s not that I’m not over it, it’s just that I can’t quit” and “I think I used to love you but I wouldn’t trade the pain for it.” Essentially, nearly all the lyrics may be traced back to a queer root, as they have all been written through the lens of making space for a queer body in an anti-queer society. The aforementioned lyrics are the most poignant of the examples but are not an exhaustive list.

The third and final category of lyric inspiration is from Fall Out Boy themselves. I aimed to take inspiration from each era, but primarily from *So Much (For) Stardust*. Figure 14 shows each instance of reference to Fall Out Boy songs, and as can be seen in the chart, eight of the eighteen explicit references come from *So Much (For) Stardust*. The others come from some of my favorite Fall Out Boy Songs, and some of my favorite lyrics in those songs.

---

<sup>89</sup> To further unpack some of these lyrics, ‘the Devil’s in the details of the crimes that we commit’ refers to the historic sodomy laws, and the general conservative Christian movement to outlaw queerness; ‘closed doors and drawers delight’ and ‘behind closed doors’ allude to the common euphemism ‘coming out of the closet.’

Movement	Lyrics	Fall Out Boy Reference
4. From the Office of Paul R. McHugh	<p>Forever bound in hazy chemicals Heartbreak in jagged lines</p> <p>I don't know how to live</p>	<p><i>The Kintsugi Kid</i> – “I spent ten years in a bit of chemical haze”</p> <p><i>Heartbreak Feels So Good</i></p> <p><i>Saturday</i> – “And I read about the afterlife but I never really lived”</p>
6. If Dreams Were Water You'd Be Drowning in Me	<p>I think I used to love you but I wouldn't trade the pain for it</p> <p>Half-doomed and semi-sweet</p> <p>I won't ask you for anything Except to stay alive</p> <p>Young volcanoes on the bedroom floor</p> <p>Behind the trigger In crowds full of strangers I've got all this love to keep to myself in crowds full of strangers So pull it</p>	<p><i>G.I.N.A.S.F.S.</i> – “It's a strange way of saying I know I'm supposed to love you”</p> <p><i>So Much (for) Stardust</i> – “What would you trade the pain for?”</p> <p><i>Disloyal Order of Water Buffaloes</i> – “I'm half doomed and you're semi-sweet”</p> <p><i>Heaven, Iowa</i> – “I will never ask you for anything except to dream sweet of me”</p> <p><i>Young Volcanoes</i></p> <p><i>Miss Missing You</i> – “Sometimes the person that you'd take a bullet for is behind the trigger”</p> <p><i>Flu Game</i> – “I've got all this love to keep to myself”</p>
7. There Will Always Be a Light On	<p>I left a light on Resisting your untrue blues Cigarette daydreams too You're the grudge I refuse to lose</p> <p>Talking to the mirror unread reply</p> <p>Would I miss the way You hate me?</p> <p>You left a door open that I can't seem to close</p> <p>You're the last real refuge</p> <p>Backroom lovers got no Stardust to get them through</p>	<p><i>Chicago Is So Two Years Ago</i> – “But there's a light on in Chicago”</p> <p><i>G.I.N.A.S.F.S.</i> – “Lips pressed close to mine, true blue”</p> <p><i>Hold Me Like a Grudge</i></p> <p><i>Heaven, Iowa</i> – “Talking to the mirror say 'save your breath, half your life you been hooked on death'”</p> <p><i>Miss Missing You</i></p> <p><i>Saturday</i> – “Saturday, when these open doors were open-ended”</p> <p><i>The Last of the Real Ones</i></p> <p><i>So Much (for) Stardust</i></p>

Figure 14: Fall Out Boy lyrics referenced in *AQUA*.

*AQUA* serves as both a continuation and response to Fall Out Boy's *So Much (For) Stardust*, bridging the narrative between the two works while channeling influences from both Fall Out Boy and my personal journey as a musician and queer person. The significance of *AQUA* and the movement titles, which draw from Fall Out Boy, queer culture, and personal experiences, enrich the narrative arc of the composition, while the lyrical content reflects and emulates Fall Out Boy's writing style, incorporating references to popular culture, personal reflections, and explicit nods to the band's own discography. Through this multifaceted approach, *AQUA* is a deeply personal and thematically rich exploration of identity, resilience, and artistic expression.

Building upon the foundation laid by Fall Out Boy's *So Much (For) Stardust*, *AQUA* serves as both a continuation and reaction, forging a creative dialogue between my own musical journey and the influences of one of my favorite bands. By consciously adapting my compositional process to align with Fall Out Boy's, I sought to capture their style while staying true to my own compositional expertise. This process involved meticulous attention to detail in melody, rhythm, and harmony, aiming to create a seamless fusion of rock and chamber music idioms.

One of the central goals of *AQUA* was to bridge the narrative gap between *So Much (For) Stardust* and my own work. Drawing inspiration from Fall Out Boy's lyrical themes and musical language, as well as my own musical language and experiences as a queer person, *AQUA* joins my creative expression with the creative expression of my idols. The significance of the movement titles enrich the narrative and meaning of the

composition, adding depth to the work as a whole. Moreover, the incorporation of musical quotations from *So Much (For) Stardust* creates a poignant bridge between the two projects and enhances the thematic continuity.

*AQUA* represents a deeply personal and ambitious endeavor that intertwines the realms of rock music and contemporary chamber music. It draws inspiration from Fall Out Boy's *So Much (For) Stardust* through both musical and narrative components. Through a multifaceted approach that embraces diverse influences and explores complex themes, *AQUA* stands as a significant work in my creative output. My hope is that it will create space for other LGBTQ+ artists in the same way that Fall Out Boy's work offered that gift to me.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Amideo, Emilio. *Queer Tidalectics: Linguistic and Sexual Fluidity in Contemporary Black Diasporic Literature*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2021.
- Bergonzi, Louis, Carter, Bruce L. and Garrett, Matthew L. "Establishing Identity, Finding Community, and Embracing Fluidity." *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, no. 207-208 (2016): 9-23.
- Blush, Stephen. *When Rock Met Disco*. Lanham, MD: Backbeat Publishing, 2023.
- Brown, Jayna, and Tavia, Nyong'o. "Queer As Punk: A Guide to LGBTQIA+ Punk." *NPR*, June 15, 2020.
- Brownstein, Carrie. *Hunger Makes Me a Modern Girl*. New York, NY: Riverhead Books, 2015.
- Butler, Judith. *Gender Trouble*. New York, NY: Routledge, 1990.
- Chaudhry, Aliya. "Review: Fall Out Boy's So Much (for) Stardust Isn't a Comeback – it's an Expansion." *Alternative Press*, March 24, 2023.
- Crasshole, Walter, Leyser, Yony, and Warfield, Liam. *Queercore: How to Punk a Revolution: An Oral History*. Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2021.
- Craton, Lincoln G. et. al. "It's Only Rock n' Roll (but I like it): Chord Perception and Rock's Liberal Harmonic Palette." *Musicae Scientiae* 25, no. 1 (2021): 92-110.
- Cusick, Suzanne G. and Peraino, Judith. "Music and Sexuality." *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 66, no. 3 (Fall 2013): 825-872.
- Day, Bobby. "Little Bitty Pretty One." Regency Records, 1957.
- Devitt, Rachel. "Keep the Best of You, 'do' the rest of you': Passing, Ambivalence, and Keeping Queer Time in Gender Performative Negotiations of Popular Music." *Popular Music* 32, no. 3 (October 2013): 427-449.
- Earl, William. "Fall Out Boy's Pete Wentz and Patrick Stump Go Deep About Their New Album, the Emo Revival and Surviving Pop Radio: 'It Was Like 'The Last Of Us.''" *Variety*, March 24, 2023.



- Edwards, Briony. “Who are Fall Out Boy in 2018?” *Louder*, January 15, 2018.
- Eloise, Marianne. “How I Relearned to Love my Favorite Band, Fall Out Boy.” *Kerrang!*, March 5, 2020.
- Fall Out Boy. *American Beauty/American Psycho*. Released January 16, 2015, recorded 2014, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- . *Believers Never Die – Greatest Hits*. Released November 17, 2009, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- “Fall Out Boy: Charity Work, Events, and Causes.” *Look To The Stars: The World of Celebrity Giving*. Last Modified 2023.
- Fall Out Boy. *Folie à Deux*. Released December 10, 2008, recorded July-September 2008, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- . *From Under the Cork Tree*. Released May 3, 2005, recorded November 2004-January 2005, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- . *Greatest Hits: Believers Never Die – Volume Two*. Released November 15, 2019, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- . *Infinity on High*. Released February 6, 2007, recorded December 2005-October 2006, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- . *Make America Psycho Again*. Released October 30, 2015, recorded 2014-2015, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- . *Mania*. Released January 19, 2018, recorded 2016-2017, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- “Fall Out Boy: ‘So Much (for) Stardust’ & New Beginnings.” interviewed by Zane Lowe, *Apple Music*, March 23, 2023.
- “Fall Out Boy on ‘So Much (for) Stardust’ and Their Own Favorite Music Videos.” interviewed by MTV News, *MTV News*, April 4, 2023.
- “Fall Out Boy on ‘So Much (for) Stardust’, Their Upcoming Arena Shows & Ethan Hawke.” interviewed by New Music Express, *In Conversation*, March 25, 2023.
- Fall Out Boy. *PAX AM Days*. Released October 15, 2013, recorded July 2013, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.

- . *Save Rock and Roll*. Released April 12, 2013, recorded October 2012-March 2013, Island Records, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- . *So Much (for) Stardust*. Released March 24, 2023, Fueled by Ramen, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- . *So Much (For) Stardust* Lyric Booklet, as printed with CD. March 24, 2023.
- . *Take This to Your Grave*. Released May 6, 2003, recorded October 2002-February 2003, Fueled by Ramen, Spotify Streaming Audio.
- Fathallah, Judith. “Is Stage-Gay Queerbaiting? The Politics of Performative Homoeroticism in Emo Bands.” *Journal of Popular Music Studies* 33, no. 1 (2021): 121-136.
- Feigin, Sara and Million, Jenna. “Pete Wentz to Harry Styles: How Assumed Queerness has Changed.” Produced by *Name 3 Songs, Name 3 Songs*, September 11, 2021. Podcast, MP3 audio.
- Friedman, Jonathan C. *The Routledge History of Social Protest in Popular Music*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2017. 121-226.
- Geffen, Sasha. *Glitter Up The Dark: How Pop Music Broke the Binary*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2020.
- Grebe, Justus and Winkler, Robert A. “Putting the ‘Punk’ Back into Pop-Punk: Analyzing Presentations of Deviance in Pop-Punk Music.” *Punk & Post-Punk* 10, no. 1 (2021): 15-27
- Hall, Donald and Jagose, Annamarie. *The Routledge Queer Studies Reader*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2012.
- Hearon, Sarah. “Ashlee Simpson and Pete Wentz’s Relationship Timeline: From Married to Coparenting Bronx.” *US Weekly*, February 19, 2024.
- Jagose, Annamarie. *Queer Theory: An Introduction*. Melbourne University Press, 1996.
- LACDMH. “A Brief History of our LGBTQIA2-S Pride Flag.” *Cultural Traditions and Connections* (Blog). *Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health*, June 16, 2022. <https://dmh.lacounty.gov/blog/2022/06/a-brief-history-of-our-lgbtqia2-s-pride-flag/#:~:text=Baker%20and%20Segerblom%27s%20flag%20debuted,serenity%3B%20and%20Violet%3A%20spirit.>

- “Lana Del Rey and Fall Out Boy Both Score No. 1 Debuts on Rock & Alternative Album Charts.” *Billboard*, April 5, 2023.
- Lilja, Esa. “Harmonic Function and Modality in Classic Heavy Metal.” *Metal Music Studies* 5, no. 3 (2019).
- Mamo, Heran. “Fall Out Boy Pledges \$100,000 from Band Fund to Support Black Lives Matter Movement.” *Billboard*, June 8, 2020.
- Manley, Brendan. “Take This to Your Grave.” *Alternative Press*, May 6, 2003.
- McDonald, Chris. “Exploring Modal Subversions in Alternative Music.” *Popular Music* 19, no. 3 (Oct. 2000): 355-363.
- McNeil, Legs and McCain, Gillian. *Please Kill Me: An Uncensored Oral History of Punk*. New York, NY: Grove Press, 1996.
- Mylrea, Hannah. “Fall Out Boy: ‘A ‘Whatever’ Album from Fall Out Boy 20 Years in is Not Worth Making.” *New Musical Express*, May 25, 2023.
- . “‘These Songs Feel Bigger than Our Band’: How Fall Out Boy’s ‘From Under the Cork Tree’ Inspired a Generation.” *National Public Radio*, May 12, 2020.
- Noble, Drew. “Teleology in Verse-Prechorus-Chorus Form, 1965-2020.” *A Journal of the Society for Music Theory* 28, no. 3 (September 2022).
- Nope*. Directed by Jordan Peele. Universal Pictures, 2022. 2 hr., 10 min.
- Nutt, Amy Ellis. “Long Shadow Cast by Psychiatrist on Transgender Issues Finally Recedes at Johns Hopkins.” *The Washington Post*, April 5, 2017.
- Of An Age*. Directed by Goron Stolevski. Roadshow Films, 2023. 1hr., 40 min.
- Osborn, Bradley T. “Beyond Verse and Chorus: Experimental Formal Structures in Post-Millennial Rock Music.” PhD diss., University of Washington, 2010.
- “Pete Wentz: Fall Out Boy, So Much (for) Stardust, Take This To Your Grave.” interviewed by Zach Sang, *Zach Sang Show*, April 6, 2023.
- Reality Bites*. Directed by Ben Stiller. Universal Studios, 1994. 1 hr., 39 min.
- “The Return of Pop-Punk and Emo.” Produced by *The New York Times*, *Popcast*, July 15, 2016. Podcast, MP3 audio.

- Reynolds, Mao. "Fall Out Boy Shoots For the Moon with 'So Much (For) Stardust'." *The Loyola Phoenix*, March 29, 2023.
- Ricks, Ellen. "Fall Out Boy Made Emo and Pop Punk More LGBTQ Friendly." *Into*, May 27, 2018.
- Romero, Brenda M. et. al., *At the Crossroads of Music and Social Justice*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 49-68, 105-123, 239-259.
- Rutherford, Kevin. "Fall Out Boy Breaks Alternative Airplay Record With First No. 1." *Billboard*, February 24, 2023.
- Samoluk, Caroline. "Fall Out Boy Returns to Pop-Punk Mastery on So Much (for) Stardust." *The Georgetown Voice*, April 25, 2023.
- Sargent, Jordan. "Fall Out Boy Want to Be Your Gateway Drug." *SPIN Magazine*, April 26, 2013.
- Schippers, Mimi. "The Social Organization of Sexuality and Gender in Alternative Hard Rock: An Analysis of Intersectionality." *Gender & Society* 14, no. 6 (December 2000): 747-764.
- Smith, Patti. *Just Kids*. Manhattan, NY: Ecco Press, 2010.
- Spanos, Brittany. "Review: Fall Out Boy Show Off Their Tightest Hooks on 'So Much (for) Stardust.'" *Rolling Stone*, March 29, 2023.
- A Star is Born*. Directed by Bradley Cooper. Warner Bros. Pictures, 2018. 2 hr., 15 min.
- Summers, Juana. "Fall Out Boy on Returning to the Basics and Making the 'Saddest New Year's Song Ever.'" *National Public Radio*, March 24, 2023.
- Trohman, Joe. *None of This Rocks*. New York, NY: Hachette Books, 2022.
- Ulaby, Neda. "Fall Out Boy Rewrites the Gender Roles of Rock." *National Public Radio*, November 30, 2007.
- Voss, Brandon. "Big Gay Following: Pete Wentz." *The Advocate*, April 9, 2007.
- Weingarten, Christopher R. et. al. "The 50 Greatest Pop-Punk Albums." *Rolling Stone*, November 15, 2017.

Yurcaba, Jo. "Friends remember Nex Benedict, Oklahoma student who died after school fight, as 'fiery kid.'" *NBC News*, February 25, 2024.

Zaleski, Annie. "Fall Out Boy are Still Confounding Haters by Refusing to be Pigeonholed." *Stereogum*, October 27, 2017.

———. "'Rock 'n' Roll is this Progressive Idea [with] Room to be Dangerous' – Pete Wentz on New Fall Out Boy." *Alternative Press*, December 2, 2014.

## **APPENDIX A - TRANSCRIPTIONS**

Original transcriptions of select songs from *So Much (For) Stardust*, in order of appearance on the album.

Score

# Love From The Other Side

Transcription

Fall Out Boy  
Trans. Blake Buehler

♩ = 160

Clarinet in Bb

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Tenor

Piano

Electric Guitar 1

Electric Guitar 2

Bass Guitar

Drum Set

©

Love From The Other Side

Musical score for measures 8-13. The score includes parts for B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), Double Bass (D.B.), and Piano (Pno.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The piano part features a complex rhythmic pattern with triplets and sixteenth notes. Dynamics include *f* (forte) and *mf* (mezzo-forte).

Musical score for measures 14-18. The score includes parts for B♭ Clarinet (B♭ Cl.), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vla.), Violoncello (Vc.), Double Bass (D.B.), and Piano (Pno.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The piano part continues with a complex rhythmic pattern. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *pp* (pianissimo).



Love From The Other Side

19

Score for measures 19-23. The instruments are B♭ Clarinet, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, and Piano. The piano part features a continuous eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand, while the left hand is mostly silent. The strings play sustained notes with long bows.

24

Score for measures 24-28. The instruments are Piano, Electric Guitar 1, Electric Guitar 2, Bass, and Drums. The piano part continues with eighth-note accompaniment. The electric guitars play chords, and the bass plays a steady eighth-note line. The drums play a consistent pattern.

Love From The Other Side

28

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

32

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

The musical score is divided into two systems. The first system (measures 28-31) features a piano with a steady eighth-note accompaniment in the right hand and rests in the left hand. Electric guitar 1 plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, while electric guitar 2 plays a similar pattern. The bass line consists of eighth notes, and the drums play a consistent pattern of eighth notes with cymbals. The second system (measures 32-35) introduces a string section (Violins I and II, Viola, and Cello) playing sustained notes with a forte (*f*) dynamic. The piano continues with its eighth-note accompaniment, and the guitars and bass maintain their rhythmic patterns. The drums continue with their eighth-note accompaniment.

Love From The Other Side

36

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

T.

*mf*

Mod-el\_\_ house life\_\_ melt

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

*p*

41

T.

\_\_ down still a \_\_ mod-ern\_\_ dreamlet - down\_\_ It kills me you know I'm \_\_ dy - ing out here What would you trade\_\_the pain for I'm not sure We were a

E.Gtr. 1

Bass

*mf*

D. S.

Love From The Other Side

48

T  
 ham-mer to the sta-tue of Da - vid... We were a pain-ting you could ne-ver frame and You were the sun - shine of my life - time What would you trade...the pain for?

E.Gtr. 1  
*mf*

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.  
*mp*

---

55

T  
 This ci - ty al - ways hangs a li - ttle bit lone - ly on me loose like a kid play - ing...pre - tend in his fa - ther's

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2  
*mf*

Bass

D. S.  
*mf*

---

62

T  
 suit I'd ne - ver go, I just want to be in - vi - ted... oh... Got to give up... Get the feel - ing, Get

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

Love From The Other Side

69

T  
— the feel-ing. Don't fight it, — fight — it, — Send my love from the oth - er si - de of the a-po - ca-lypse — And I just

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

*f*

76

T  
— a-bout snapped Don't look back, Ev-'ry lo-vers got a lit-tle dag-ger in their ha - and Love from the oth - er si - de of the a-po - ca-lypse

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

83

T  
— And I just — a-bout snapped Don't look back, Ev-'ry lov-ers got a lit-tle dag-ger in their ha - and

Pno.

*pp* — *mf*

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

Love From The Other Side

89 *mf*  
T Gen-er - a - tion\_ sleep\_ I'm\_ fall - ing\_ in  
Pno.  
E.Gtr. 1 *mp*  
E.Gtr. 2 *f* *mp*  
Bass *f* *mp*  
D. S. *f* *mp*

94  
T \_ and out of\_ love\_ I'm get - ing that tit-ed\_ feel - ing out here What would you trade\_ the pain for? I'm not sure No here left for us to go but hea-  
E.Gtr. 1 *mf*  
E.Gtr. 2 *mf*  
Bass *mf*  
D. S. *mf*

101  
T - ven Sum-mer fall-ing through our fin-gers a - gain\_ and You were the sun - shine of my life - time What would you trade\_ the pain for? We're told we got ta  
E.Gtr. 1  
E.Gtr. 2  
Bass  
D. S.

Love From The Other Side

108  
T  
8  
get a-head, yeah no mat-ter what it takes But there's no way off the ham-ster wheel on this rat-race

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

115  
T  
8  
I'd ne-ver go I just want to be in-vi-ted oh Got to get up Get the feel-ing Get the feel-ing Don't

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

122  
T  
8  
*f*  
fight it fight it send-ing my love from the oth-er si-de of the a-po-ca-lypse And I just a-bout strapped

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

Love From The Other Side

129

T  
 Don't look back Ev-'ry lov-ers got a lit-tle dag-ger in their ha-and's Love from the oth-er si-de of the a-po-ca-lypse And I just

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

136

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

T  
 — a-bout snapped Don't look back, Ev-'ry lov-ers got a lit-tle dag-ger in their ha - and's I saw you in a bright clear field Hur-i-cane

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.



Love From The Other Side

143

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

D.B. *mf*

T.  
heat in my head the kind of pain you feel to get good in the end good in the end In - scribed like stone and fi - ded like the rain "Give

Pno.

Bass *mp*

D. S. *mp*

Love From The Other Side

154

Vln. I  
Vln. II  
Vla.  
Vc.  
D.B.  
T  
Pno.  
Bass  
D. S.

up what you love" — "Give up what you love — be - fore it does you in" — Send - ing my

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 154 through 156. It features staves for Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, Tenor, Piano, Bass, and Drums. The Tenor part includes the lyrics: "up what you love" — "Give up what you love — be - fore it does you in" — Send - ing my. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The drums play a steady eighth-note pattern.

157

T  
E.Gtr. 1  
E.Gtr. 2  
Bass  
D. S.

love from the oth - er si - de of the a - po - ca - lypse — And I just — a - bout snapped Don't look back.

Detailed description: This block contains the musical score for measures 157 through 160. It features staves for Tenor, Electric Guitar 1, Electric Guitar 2, Bass, and Drums. The Tenor part includes the lyrics: "love from the oth - er si - de of the a - po - ca - lypse — And I just — a - bout snapped Don't look back." The electric guitars play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes, and the bass plays a similar eighth-note line. The drums continue with the eighth-note pattern. A double bar line is present at the end of measure 160.

Love From The Other Side

163

T  
Ev-'ry lov-ers got a lit-tle dag-ger in their ha-and— Love from the oth-er si-de of the a-po-ca-lypse— And I just

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

169

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

T  
— a-bout snapped Don't look back, Ev-'ry lov-ers got a lit-tle dag-ger in their ha-and Love

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

Love From The Other Side

176

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

D.B.

T.

Send - ing my love,

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

Score

# Hold Me Like a Grudge

Transcription

Fall Out Boy  
Trans. Blake Buehler

**Driven** ♩=108

Tenor

Piano

Electric Guitar 1

Electric Guitar 2

Bass Guitar

Drum Set

T

Bass

D. S.

T

Bass

D. S.

*mf*

*mp*

*p*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

When you ask how I've been I know you mean well, I know, you mean well

Who am I di - al - ing to - night? That's a bum - mer Thaw out my freez - er burn feel - ings for twen - ty sum - mers I'm just a

Hold Me Like a Grudge

13

T  
cher-ub rid-ing com-ets through the night sky— Scream-ing at the stars like night lights and I love my life, love my life

E.Gtr. 2  
*mp*

Bass  
*mp*

D. S.

16

T  
run-ning mid-dle fin-gers through the red lights And I guess I'm get-ting ol-der cause I'm less pissed when I

Pno.  
*mp*

E.Gtr. 1  
overdrive  
mute  
*mp*

E.Gtr. 2  
*mp*

Bass  
*mp*

D. S.

Hold Me Like a Grudge

18

T  
can't get on - to the guest list\_\_ to the end of the world, end of the world, fe-ver drem tan-ger-ine sweat When I get

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

21

T  
down down Si-lent kill - ers are these years com - ing like waves\_\_\_\_\_ I pút the fun<sup>3</sup> in-to dys-function (digitally affected, chant-like)

Pno.

Bass

D. S.  
clap

The musical score is written for a band. It features a vocal line (T) with lyrics, a piano accompaniment (Pno.) with treble and bass staves, two electric guitar parts (E.Gtr. 1 and E.Gtr. 2), a bass line (Bass), and a double bass part (D. S.). The score is divided into two systems. The first system starts at measure 18 and ends at measure 20. The second system starts at measure 21 and ends at measure 24. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The vocal line includes lyrics and performance instructions such as "(digitally affected, chant-like)". The piano part provides harmonic support with chords and bass notes. The electric guitar parts include a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with 'x' marks indicating muted notes, and a bass line with eighth notes. The double bass part features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

Hold Me Like a Grudge

(sung)

25 *f*

T  
Hold me, Hold me like a grudge The world is al-ways spin-ning and I can't keep up Whoa, —  
overdrive

E.Gtr. 1

Bass *mf*

D. S. *mf*

29

T  
Fast - er — and fast - er — can't do it on my own — Part time soul - mate full time prob - lem,

E.Gtr. 1

Bass

D. S.

32

T  
So hold me like a grudge Hold me like a grudge, yeah,

E.Gtr. 1 *f*

E.Gtr. 2

Bass *f*

D. S.

The musical score is arranged in a standard rock band format. It features a vocal line (T) with lyrics, an electric guitar 1 (E.Gtr. 1) part with a heavy overdrive effect, an electric guitar 2 (E.Gtr. 2) part, a bass line (Bass), and a double bass/drum (D. S.) part. The score is divided into three systems, each starting with a measure number (25, 29, 32). The first system (measures 25-28) has a vocal line starting with 'Hold me, Hold me like a grudge...' and a guitar 1 part with a dense, rhythmic overdrive pattern. The second system (measures 29-31) continues the vocal line with 'Fast - er — and fast - er — can't do it on my own — Part time soul - mate full time prob - lem,'. The third system (measures 32-34) concludes with 'So hold me like a grudge Hold me like a grudge, yeah,'. The guitar 1 part has a dynamic marking of *f* (forte) starting at measure 32. The bass and drum parts provide a steady, rhythmic accompaniment throughout.



Hold Me Like a Grudge

36

T  
yeah, Hold me like a grudge Hold me like a

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

39

T  
grudge. I guess some-how we made it back With a

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

43

T  
few dreams of ours still in - tact I am a dia - mond on the in - side just add the pres - sure

Bass

D. S.

*mf*

The musical score is arranged in systems. Each system includes a vocal line (T) and three instrumental lines (E.Gtr. 1, E.Gtr. 2, Bass). A double bar line with a repeat sign is used for the D.S. (Da Capo) section. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The score is divided into three systems, with measure numbers 36, 39, and 43 marking the beginning of each system. The lyrics are written below the vocal line.

Hold Me Like a Grudge

47

T  
Know it's in-side me but I got no map to my own trea-sure I'm just a cher-ub rid-ing com-ets through the night sky \_

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

50

T  
Scream-ing at the stars like night lights and I love my life, love my life run-ning mid-dle fin-gers through the red lights And I

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

53

T  
guess I'm get-ting ol-der cause I'm less pissed when I can't get on - to the guest list \_ to the end of the world, end of the world,

Pno.  
*mp*

E.Gtr. 1  
overdrive  
mute  
*mp*

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

Hold Me Like a Grudge

56

T  
fe-ver drem tan-ger-ine sweat When I get down down Si-lent kill-ers are these years com-inglike

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S. clap

---

59

T  
waves (digitally affected, chant-like) I put the fun in-to dys-func-tion Hold me, hold me like a grudge The (sung) *f*

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1 *mf* overdrive

Bass *mf*

D. S. *mf*

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the song 'Hold Me Like a Grudge'. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system (measures 56-58) includes a vocal line (T) with lyrics, piano accompaniment (Pno.), two electric guitar parts (E.Gtr. 1 and E.Gtr. 2), a bass line, and a double bass line (D. S.) with a 'clap' instruction. The second system (measures 59-61) includes a vocal line (T) with lyrics and performance instructions like '(digitally affected, chant-like)', '(sung)', and '*f*', piano accompaniment (Pno.), electric guitar parts (E.Gtr. 1 with '*mf*' and 'overdrive'), a bass line with '*mf*', and a double bass line (D. S.) with '*mf*'. The score is in a key with one sharp (F#) and a common time signature.

Hold Me Like a Grudge

63  
T world is al - ways spin - ning and I can't give up whoa, fast - er and fas - ter can't

E.Gtr. 1

Bass

D. S.

66  
T do it on my own, part time soul-mate full time prob-lem So hold me like a grudge

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

70  
T Hold me like a grudge Yeah, yeah, hold me like a grudge Hold me like a

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S.

Hold Me Like a Grudge

75

T  
grudge I thought that I knew bet-ter thought that it would get bet-ter I fig-ured

E.Gtr. 1  
overdrive  
mute  
*mp*

E.Gtr. 2

Bass

D. S. clap *p*

78

T  
some-how by now— I would have got it to - ge - ther And if you put your put your heart in it, heart in it, Then we'll

E.Gtr. 1

Bass

D. S. *p*

80

T  
do more than just get by to - ge - ther — Call you up and de - mand you have no fun with - out

E.Gtr. 1

Bass

D. S.

The musical score is arranged in four systems, each corresponding to a line of lyrics. Each system includes a vocal line (T), an electric guitar line 1 (E.Gtr. 1), an electric guitar line 2 (E.Gtr. 2), a bass line (Bass), and a double bass line (D. S.). The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 8/8. The score includes various musical notations such as rests, notes, and chords. Performance instructions include 'overdrive', 'mute', 'mp', 'clap', and 'p'. Measure numbers 75, 78, and 80 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

Hold Me Like a Grudge

(digitally affected, chant-like)

82

T  
me <sup>3</sup> I'm like a storm on the hor-i-zon, storm on the hor-i-zon I put the fun in to dys-func-tion

E.Gtr. I

Bass

D. S.

**f**

85

T  
Hold me, hold me like a grudge The world is always spin-ning and I

E.Gtr. I  
overdrive

Bass  
**mf**

D. S.  
**mf**

88

T  
can't give up whoa, fast-er and fas-ter can't do it on my own,

E.Gtr. I

Bass

D. S.

The musical score is written in G major and 8/8 time. It consists of three systems of staves. The first system (measures 82-84) features a vocal line with triplet markings and lyrics: "me I'm like a storm on the hor-i-zon, storm on the hor-i-zon I put the fun in to dys-func-tion". The guitar accompaniment includes a distorted electric guitar part with a triplet figure and a double bass part with a steady eighth-note pattern. The second system (measures 85-87) has a vocal line with lyrics: "Hold me, hold me like a grudge The world is always spin-ning and I". The guitar part is marked "overdrive" and features a dense, rhythmic chordal texture. The bass part continues with a consistent eighth-note accompaniment. The third system (measures 88-90) has a vocal line with lyrics: "can't give up whoa, fast-er and fas-ter can't do it on my own,". The guitar and bass parts maintain their respective textures from the previous systems.

Hold Me Like a Grudge

91  
T  
part time soul - mate full time prob - lem So hold me like a grudge  
E.Gtr. 1  
E.Gtr. 2  
Bass  
D. S.  
94  
T  
Hold me like a grudge Yeah, yeah, hold me like a grudge  
E.Gtr. 1  
E.Gtr. 2  
Bass  
D. S.  
98  
T  
Hold me like a grudge Hold me like a grudge  
E.Gtr. 1  
E.Gtr. 2  
Bass  
D. S.

Detailed description: This is a musical score for the song "Hold Me Like a Grudge". It consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 91-93) features a vocal line with lyrics "part time soul - mate full time prob - lem So hold me like a grudge". The guitar parts include a rhythmic accompaniment on E.Gtr. 1 and a solo on E.Gtr. 2 starting with a forte (f) dynamic. The bass line provides a steady accompaniment. The drum set (D. S.) plays a consistent pattern. The second system (measures 94-97) has a vocal line with lyrics "Hold me like a grudge Yeah, yeah, hold me like a grudge". The guitar parts continue with similar accompaniment. The third system (measures 98-101) has a vocal line with lyrics "Hold me like a grudge Hold me like a grudge". The guitar parts conclude with a final chord. The score is written in a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature.

Score

# I am my Own Muse

## Transcription

Fall Out Boy  
Trans. Blake Buehler

Driven ♩ = 73

Piccolo  
Flute  
Clarinet in B $\flat$   
Bassoon  
Trumpet in C  
Horn in F  
Trombone  
Tuba  
Violin I  
Violin II  
Viola  
Cello  
Double Bass  
Tenor 1  
Tenor 2  
Electric Guitar 1  
Electric Guitar 2  
Bass Guitar  
Drum Set



I am my Own Muse

Musical score for the first system of 'I am my Own Muse'. The score includes parts for Piccolo, Flute, Bass Clarinet, Bassoon, Trumpet, Horn, Trombone, Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, Double Bass, Electric Guitar 1, and Double Bass. The music is in a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and a 4/4 time signature. The first system shows the beginning of the piece with various instruments entering. Dynamics include *ff* (fortissimo) for the woodwinds and *f* (forte) for the strings.

Musical score for the second system of 'I am my Own Muse', featuring vocal lines. The score includes parts for Piccolo, Flute, Bass Clarinet, Violin I, Tenor 1 (T1), Tenor 2 (T2), Electric Guitar 1, and Double Bass. The vocal lines are written in a key signature of three sharps and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "Here I am not sure you should take a chance I like play - ing dumb but - ting you fig - ure it out but I was find - ed in my own... do - line...". Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *pp* (pianissimo). There are also performance markings like *drop* and *pp*.

I am my Own Muse

20

Bsn. *p* *f*

C Tpt. *p*

Tuba *pp* *f*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vc. *pp* *f*

D.B. *pp* *f*

T. I  
both on all the things we dreamed a - boat Smash all the gut - ars 'Til we see all the stars... Oh... get to throw this year a - way we get to throw this year a - way like

T. 2  
both on all the things we dreamed a - boat

E.Gtr. 1 *f*

Bass *f*

D.S. *f*

24

Picc. *mf* *mf*

Fl. *f*

Bb. Cl. *f*

Bsn. *f*

C Tpt. *f*

Hrn. *f*

Tbn. *f*

Tuba *f*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vc. *f*

D.B. *f*

T. I  
A bad luck charm... Smash all the gut - ars 'Til we see all the stars... Oh... get to throw this year a - way we get to throw this year a - way like A bad luck charm

E.Gtr. 1 *f*

E.Gtr. 2 *mf* *overdrive*

Bass *f*

D.S. *f*

I am my Own Muse

Pic. *mf*

Fl.

Ban.

Tuba

Vln. I *mf p*

Vc. *mf*

D.B. *mf*

T1 *mf*  
Tram - peds bring the an - gels... but they nev - er came... And no - one let them in cause they did - n't know my name...  
did - n't know my name...

T2

E. Otr. I *mf p*

Bass *mp*

D. S. *p*

T1 *p*  
I know I keep my feet - lops so tickled a - way... but 't no - ther day spent hop - ing we don't fall a - part... So deep a bush on all the things we dreamt a -  
hop - ing we don't fall a - part

T2

E. Otr. I

Bass

D. S.

Ban. *p* *f*

C. Tpt. *p*

Tuba *pp* *f*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vc. *pp* *f*

D.B. *pp* *f*

T1 *mf*  
boat Smash all the gut - ars 'Til we see all the stars... Oh... got to throw this year a - way we got to throw this year a - way like A bad luck charm

E. Otr. I

Bass *f*

D. S. *mf*

I am my Own Muse

The musical score is arranged for a large ensemble. The instruments listed on the left are: Piccolo (Picc.), Flute (Fl.), B♭ Clarinet (B♭-Cl.), Bassoon (Bsn.), C Trumpet (C Tpt.), Horn (Hn.), Trombone (Tbn.), Tuba (Tuba), Violin I (Vln. I), Violin II (Vln. II), Viola (Vc.), Double Bass (D.B.), Trumpet I (T1), Electric Guitar 1 (E. Gtr. 1), Electric Guitar 2 (E. Gtr. 2), Bass, and Drums (D. S.). The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#). The vocal line (T1) includes the following lyrics: "Stash all the pot - ers 'til we see all the stars. Oh, got to throw this year a - way we got to throw this year a - way like A bad luck charm". The score features various musical notations including dynamics (e.g., *f*, *ff*), articulation (accents), and performance instructions (e.g., *mf*).

I am my Own Muse

Score for "I am my Own Muse" featuring various instruments and vocal lines. The score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of three sharps (F#, C#, G#).

**Instrumentation:** Piccolo, Flute, Bassoon, Horns (Hn.), Trombones (Tbn.), Tubas (Tuba), Violins I (Vln. I), Violins II (Vln. II), Viola (Vc.), Double Bass (D.B.), Tenor 1 (T1), Tenor 2 (T2), Electric Guitar 1 (E. Gtr. 1), Bassoon (Bsn.), Horns (Hn.), Trombones (Tbn.), Tubas (Tuba), Violins I (Vln. I), Viola (Vc.), Double Bass (D.B.), Tenor 1 (T1), Electric Guitar 1 (E. Gtr. 1), Electric Guitar 2 (E. Gtr. 2), Bass (Bass), and Drums (D. S.).

**Lyrics:**

T1: So let's twist the knife a - gain twist the knife a - gain like we did last sum - mer Let's twist the knife a - gain twist the knife a - gain... I'm... just

T2: Let's twist the knife a - gain twist the knife... a - gain

E. Gtr. 1: *ff*

Bsn.: *mf*

Hn.: *mf*

Tbn.: *mf*

Tuba: *mf*

Vln. I: *mf*

Vln. II: *mf*

Vc.: *mf*

D.B.: *mf*

T1: try - ing To keep it to - go - that but it gets a lit - tle hard - er when it nev - er gets bet - ter I'm try - ing to keep it to - go - that, to keep it to - go - that, keep it to - go - that, no

E. Gtr. 1: *f*

E. Gtr. 2: *f*

Bass: *f*

D. S.: *ppp*

I am my Own Muse

64

Bsn. *f*

Tuba *f*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vc. *f*

D.B. *f*

T1 *f*

E.Gtr. I *f*

Bass *f*

D.S. *mf*

Pic. *f*

Fl. *f*

Ob. Cl. *f*

Bsn. *f*

C. Tpt. *f*

Hr. *f*

Tbn. *f*

Tuba *f*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vc. *f*

D.B. *f*

T1 *f*

E.Gtr. I *f*

E.Gtr. 2 *mf*

Bass *f*

D.S. *mf*

Sings all the glit - ers 'Til we see all the stars. Oh, got to throw this year a - way we got to throw this year a - way like A bad luck charm

I am my Own Muse

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with the following parts from top to bottom:

- Picc.
- Fl.
- B♭-Cl.
- C Trpt.
- Hrn.
- Tbn.
- Tuba.
- Vln. I.
- Vln. II.
- Vla.
- Vcl.
- D.B.
- T1.
- E. Gtr. I.
- Bass.
- D. S.

The score includes various dynamic markings such as *p*, *mf*, *f*, and *ff*, and features complex rhythmic patterns, particularly in the double bass and drum parts. The percussion part (D. S.) shows a dense, rhythmic accompaniment with a *sub p* marking.

Score

# So Much (For) Stardust

Transcription

Fall Out Boy  
Trans. Blake Buehler

♩ = 86

Trumpet in B♭ 1

Trumpet in B♭ 2

Trumpet in B♭ 3

Trombone 1

Trombone 2

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Cello

Double Bass

Tenor

Piano

Electric Guitar 1

Electric Guitar 2

Electric Bass

Drum Set

Gospel Choir

©



So Much (For) Stardust

8

Pno.

D. S.

11

B♭ Tpt. 1

B♭ Tpt. 2

B♭ Tpt. 3

Tbn. 1

Tbn. 2

T.

I'm in a win - ter mood. Dream-ing of spring now. Burn-ing my - self down. burn-ing my - self down, burn-ing.

Pno.

D. S.

15

T.

I feel like some-thing bad's been stretched out o-ver and o - ver a-gain. Un-til I'm creased and I'm bout to break down the mid-dle split me right down the mid-dle right right down the mid-dle yeah

Pno.

E. Gtr. 1

E. B.

D. S.

So Much (For) Stardust

19

*mp*

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 1

*mp*

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 2

*mp*

Tbn. 1

*mp*

T

The stars are the same as e-ver and I don't have the guts to keep it to - ge-ther Stuck in the per - ma frost Stuck in the per - ma frost

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

*mp*

E.Gtr. 2

*mp*

E.B.

*mp*

D. S.

23

T

Life is just a game, may - be I'm stuck in a lone - ly loop my bu - by

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

E.B.

D. S.

So Much (For) Stardust

27

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 1 *mp*

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 2 *mp*

Tbn. 1 *mp*

T *f*

Pno. *mp*

E.Gtr. 1 *mf*

E.Gtr. 2 *mf*

E.B. *mf*

D. S.

So much for star - dust We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all —

31

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 1

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

T

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

E.B.

D. S.

So much for Star - dust — We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all —

So Much (For) Stardust

36

**Pno.** *mf*

**D. S.**

**B> Tpt. 1** *f*

**B> Tpt. 2** *f*

**B> Tpt. 3** *f*

**Tbn. 1** *f*

**Tbn. 2** *f*

**T.** *mf*  
I need the sound of crowds or I can't fall a-sleep at night, Can't take my thoughts and I\_\_\_ Can't take my thoughts and I\_\_\_ am a-wake

**Pno.**

**D. S.**

**T.** *ff*  
An-oth-er year of pos - si - bi - li - ties left un - wrapped like it's\_\_\_ the day right af-ter Christ - mas past and I'm pret-ty po - si - tive my pain is - n't cool enough, pain is - n't cool enough

**Pno.**

**E. Gtr. 1** *mp*

**E. B.** *mp*

**D. S.**

So Much (For) Stardust

48

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

T

Like a sledge-ham-mer to a dis-co ball Crush-in' all my low low low low Ache it 'til you make it Ache it 'til you make \_\_\_ it

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

*mp*

E.B.

D.S.

52

T

I think I've been go - ing through it And I've been put - ing your name to it

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

E.B.

D.S.

So Much (For) Stardust

56

B> Tpt. 1 *mf*

B> Tpt. 2 *mf*

Tbn. 1 *mf*

T *f*  
So much for Star - dust we thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, —

Pno. *mp*

E.Gtr. 1 *mf*

E.Gtr. 2 *mf*

E.B. *mf*

D. S.

60

B> Tpt. 1

B> Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

T  
So much for Star - dust — We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, —

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

E.B.

D. S.

The musical score is arranged in a standard orchestral layout. It includes parts for two B-flat Trumpets (Tpt. 1 and 2), one Trombone (Tbn. 1), a Tenor (T), Piano (Pno.), two Electric Guitars (E.Gtr. 1 and 2), Electric Bass (E.B.), and Drums (D. S.). The vocal parts are written in a single line with lyrics underneath. The score is divided into two systems, with the first system starting at measure 56 and the second at measure 60. Dynamics such as *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *f* (forte) are indicated throughout. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The vocal line features a melodic phrase that is repeated with slight variations in the two systems.

So Much (For) Stardust

65

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

*mf*

T. In a - no - ther life you were my babe in a - no - ther life You were the sun - shine of my life - time what would you trade the pain for? I'm not sure. In a - no - ther life you were my

*mp*

*p*

70

*p*

T. babe in a - no - ther life you were the sun - shine of my life - time what would you trade the pain for? I'm not sure. —

So Much (For) Stardust

75

T  
I used to be a real go - gett - er I used to think it all gets bet - ter,

Pno.  
*mf*

E.Gtr. 1  
*mp*

E.Gtr. 2  
*mp*

E.B.  
*mf*

D. S.  
*mf*

77

B♭ Tpt. 1  
*mp*

B♭ Tpt. 2  
*mp*

Tbn. 1  
*mp*

T  
*f*  
So much for Star - dust We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all —

Pno.  
*mp*

E.Gtr. 1  
*mf*

E.Gtr. 2  
*mf*

E.B.  
*mf*

D. S.  
*mf*

The image shows a page of a musical score for the song "So Much (For) Stardust". It includes vocal lines for two tenors (T) and instrumental parts for piano (Pno.), electric guitar 1 (E.Gtr. 1), electric guitar 2 (E.Gtr. 2), electric bass (E.B.), drums (D. S.), B♭ trumpet 1 (B♭ Tpt. 1), B♭ trumpet 2 (B♭ Tpt. 2), and tuba (Tbn. 1). The score is in 9/8 time and features lyrics such as "I used to be a real go-getter" and "So much for Stardust".



So Much (For) Stardust

87

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 1

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

T

So much for Star - dust\_\_\_ We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all,\_\_\_

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

E.B.

D. S.

89

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 1

B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

T

So much for Star - dust We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all,\_\_\_

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

E.B.

D. S.

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for the song "So Much (For) Stardust". The score is arranged for a vocal soloist and a full band. The vocal line is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are: "So much for Star - dust\_\_\_ We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all,\_\_\_". The instrumental parts include: B<sup>b</sup> Tpt. 1 and 2, Tbn. 1, Pno. (Piano), E.Gtr. 1 and 2 (Electric Guitars), E.B. (Electric Bass), and D. S. (Drum Set). The score is divided into two systems, with the first system starting at measure 87 and the second system starting at measure 89. The notation includes various musical symbols such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

So Much (For) Stardust

89

B> Tpt. 1

B> Tpt. 2

Tbn. 1

T

Pno.

E.Gtr. 1

E.Gtr. 2

E.B.

D.S.

T

D.S.

Gos. Ch.

93

T

Gos. Ch.

103

T

Gos. Ch.

So much for Star - dust, We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all

So much So much We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all So much, so much so

So much for Star - dust We thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all So much for Star - dust, We

So much

thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all, thought we had it all So much for Star - dust We

*mf*

*diminuendo*

*pp*

*pppp*

## VITA

Upon graduating from Cedar Cliff High School in Camp Hill, Pennsylvania, in 2018, Blake Buehler entered Furman University in Greenville, South Carolina. There, he graduated Cum Laude in May 2022 with a Bachelor of Music in Composition and was awarded the Harry B. Shucker Outstanding Student Leader Award for his numerous advocacy and philanthropy initiatives at the University. He then began his Master of Music in Composition at Stephen F. Austin State University in Nacogdoches, TX, and served a full graduate assistantship in Music Theory. During his tenure at Stephen F. Austin State University he was the recipient of the Dan Beaty Memorial Music Scholarship. He will graduate with a Master of Music in Composition in May 2024. Buehler's music is a place of radical acceptance, and he is dedicated to activism and leadership through music.

Permanent Address: 4005 Glenfinnan Place, Mechanicsburg, PA, 17055

The style guide for this document was *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian (9<sup>th</sup> Edition).

This thesis was prepared by Blake Buehler.